

999.6.31

THE CLOUDS.

A COMEDY.

Translated from the Greek of
ARISTOPHANES.

*Si proprius fies,
Te capiet magis. —*

By Mr. THEOBALD.



L O N D O N :

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CHITAYA





T O

John Glanville, Esq;

S I R,

 T is no small Satisfaction to me, that I am allow'd to pay my Respects to you in this Publick manner ; I have receiv'd a Multitude of Obligations from you,

A 3 and

DEDICATION.

and I am never better pleas'd than that the World should know I have Gratitude enough to remember Favours. You have always shew'd me the Esteem of a Relation; and with that Air of Particularity, I had reason to think my self a Favourite One: Nor is this Confession less your Praise, than my Happiness; that you are not byass'd by the Fashionable Pride of the Times, which expects that something more than Affinity in Blood should recommend a Kinsman, and that the Addition either of Titular Honour, or Affluence of Fortune, should contribute to make him worth the Cwning.

But

DEDICATION.

But it may look like an Assumption of Merit in my self, and an Injustice to your Character, if, after this Boast of your Favour, I do not ingeniously confess, it is in a great Measure owing to the Temper and Natural Generosity of your Soul : The true old *British* Hospitality can never be extinct, whilst you are Living; or any that know you well enough, to be just to your Memory. For your Table seems the perfect Standard of a regular Oeconomy; always Copious, yet without Profusion; and ever provided for the Reception of a Friend, or the Relief of the Poor.

You.

DEDICATION.

You must pardon me, *Sir*, if I offend in bringing to Light these private Virtues of your Life, which you have still cherish'd without any Ostentation of them : I hope, I am sufficiently excus'd in the Declaration, in that I speak from a Personal Knowledge ; And when you admitted me for a whole Season under your Roof, I could not but see your Affection to your Friends, or Compassion for the Distress'd, unless you had commanded me to be blind on these Occasions. Permit me, *Sir*, to remember the Pleasures of that Season, when a Country Village equally administered to Solitude and Conversation ; when

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DEDICATION.

we wanted no Business, to make the Time seem short; but every Morning that rose, brought on its Enjoyments: The Harmony of your Family, and the Charms of so perfect an Unity at home, made us never Ambitious of Calling in Foreign Aids to Diversion, but rescued us from many an Insipid Fatigue of Formality and Visitation.

I had then but the Indigested Learning of a School-boy, and wanted Judgment to make Use of those Talents I either owed to Nature, or the Benefits of my Education; yet whenever the Vanity

of

DEDICATION.

of Youth led me to a Composition, you view'd my Performance with such an Eye of Indulgence and Encouragement, as if it had been really Capable of giving you Satisfaction: I fear, I am yet too raw a Pretender to *Letters*; but when I offer a Translation to your View, I may reasonably pretend to entertain you with a Foundation of Good Sense, however awkwardly deliver'd at Second hand.

For this Comedy of *the Clouds*, the Authority of its Praise in *Greece* is so well establish'd, that a Repetition of their *Encomiums* were to suppose you a Stranger to its Character

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racter and Merits : Nor is it so Antique either in Language or Constitution, but that its Beauties are touching to the present Age ; and, if we may believe the polite Madam *Dacier*, she professes herself so charm'd with this Piece, that tho' she had translated it, and read it over *Two hundred times*, it still had not lost its Relish, nor did she ever find herself tir'd of it.

If it proves an agreeable Amusement to You on its Perusal, and is so far entitled to your Approbation, as to deserve your Protection, I shall think my self amply rewarded for my Labour ; and happy in
that

D E D I C A T I O N.

that it has given me this Opportunity
of professing myself,

S I R,

Your most Obliged,

and Obedient,

Humble Servant,

Lew. Theobald.

THE (1) PROLOGUE.

I Protest to you, Gentlemen, by *Bacchus* that has brought me up, that I intend to tell you my Thoughts with all the Frankness imaginable; So may I get the better of my Rivals, and pass in your Judgments for an accomplit'd Poet, as I am perswaded you are very knowing as well as equitable Judges! For which Reason, Sirs, I am fond of presenting you with the very best of my Performances, and about which I have bestow'd the greatest Labour. You know that in the first Comedy which bore this Title, I had the Misfortune to be betray'd by Some who abus'd their Authority, only to rob me of the (2) Prize which was my due. 'Tis on this Account, I now complain to all my honourable Judges among you, in an Ambition of pleasing whom alone I undergo the Fatigue of Writing. You see well, Gentlemen, that this Partiality has not prevail'd on me to except against you for my Judges, or to cease procuring you fresh Diversion; nor have I forgot the Approbation and Applauses you gave to my (3) first Piece, without knowing the Author. As I was then very Young, and (4) the Laws did not allow me to own my First-born, I was constrain'd to thrust it

(1) This Prologue was by Aristophanes plac'd at the End of his first Act, but as it is not now Customary with us to have any thing interrupt the course of the Theatral Action, once begun; I have ventur'd, with Madam Dacier, to prefix it to the Play.

(2) When Aristophanes exhibited his first Comedy of the *Clouds*, his Judges awarded the Victory to one *Ameiphas*.

(3) The first Piece he call'd

Dæsilætic, or the *Guest*; of which there are now only some short Fragments extant, preserv'd in the Works of *Suidas* and *Athenaeus*.

(4) The Athenians had a Law that prohibited any Poet to bring a Play on the Stage, till he was 30 or 40 Years old. Aristophanes could not abstain from writing so long, and he got *Cleonides* and *Callistrate*, two of the Comedians, to Father his first Plays,

B forth

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forth under the Umbrage of another Name, but it soon found a Father that brought it up, presented it to you, and you vouchsaſd it your Smiles. To Day then, Sirs, this new Piece appears on the Stage like a (5) ſecond *Electra*, to ſee if ſhe can meet with her old Friends, whom ſhe will prefently know, if ſhe once ſets Eyes on the Lock of her *Oreſſes*. But examine her Conduct and Chafftity. She comes with no unſeemly or ridiculous Habits to make the Boyiſh Witlings laugh; does not amuſe herſelf with ral-lying (6) the Baldneſs of Age; entertains you with no Dances that ſhock your Modesty: Introduces no whimsical old Don, that at every Speech plays at Quarter-staff with his Cudgel, beats all that come within the Wind of it, and ſo takes up the Audience with his wretched Buffonneries, that they are prevented from remarking his inſipid Ralle-ries, and more flat Adventures that are of no Conſequence. She does not come like (7) a Fury with her Flambeaus, and fill the Scene with her Screamſ. In ſhort, Sirs, ſhe comes before you, confiding in her Native Beauty, and the Force of her Diſtinction. For my ſelf, that might be proud of the Coſtume, I am not vain, or ſwell in my Pe-formance; nor do I ſtrive to deceiver you twice or thrice over with the ſame thing a little diſguis'd: I bring upon the Stage always not only new Subjects, but ſuch as have no Reſemblance to each other, and yet are always equally engaging. You are my Wiſeſſes, that having

(5) The Poet alludes to the Tragedy of *Aſchylos* call'd *Chæphora*; wherein *Electra*, going to make Libations on her Father *Agamemnon*'s Tomb, finds a Lock of Hair, which ſhe is perfwaded muſt belong to her Brother *Oreſſes*, and that he was come to her Relief. The Po-er here compares this Comedy to *Electra*; and his other Piece, call'd, *The Guests*, to *Oreſſes*; and the Approbation they had given it to that ſame Lock of Hair: He ſays then, that as *Electra* knew her Brother by his

Hair, which ſhe found on the Tomb, ſo this Comedy of the *Clouds* will own its old Friends, if it but perceives ſome Marks of that Approbation they be-fore gave its Brother, viz. his Comedy of *The Guests*.

(6) This Rub is meant on *Eupolis*, who, in all his Comedies, banters Baldneſs.

(7) The Poet does here, what I have already remark'd in my Notes on *Plinius*, rally the Tra-gick Writers for introducing Furies with Torches,

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once foil'd (8) *Cleon*, I no more insult him: But our Novices in Comedy as soon as ever (9) *Hyperbolus* gave them Occasion of a Quarrel, have been perpetually kicking at the poor Scoundrel and his Mother. *Eupolis* at first brought his (10) *Marica* on the Theatre, wherein he has had the Insolence to pillage my whole Comedy (11) of the Knights; thinking he had sufficiently disguis'd his Theft by adding the Character of an old Damsel who caper'd to a dishonest Measure, with which he design'd to have diverted you. Yet, my good Friends, (12) this old Damsel is not of his own Invention, but he has purloin'd Her from *Phrynicus*. After *Eupolis*, (13) *Hermippus* likewise spet his Venom at *Hyperbolus*, and all our other Poets in Succession have let themselves loose on this poor Sufferer, but have continually pursued the Ideas and Images I have given in my Knights. I am content then, Sirs, that they who can laugh at their Pieces, should not be diverted at mine; but if you can take any Pleasure in me and my Invention, you will make me have a better Opinion hereafter of your Taste and Judgment.

(8) *Cleon* dy'd about a Year, or 18 Months, after the Representation of this Piece; *Aristophanes* writ his Comedy of the Knights against him.

(9) *Hyperbolus* was a Maker of Copper Lamps; to defraud his Customers, he mix'd up his Mettle with Lead. He was of a vile and impudent Character, and procur'd himself to be chosen General of the Athenians. *Nicias* got him condemn'd by the Ostracism; and the Athenians ashamed to have employ'd against so wicked and contemptible a Man a form of Judgment, which they had only us'd towards Persons of considerable Birth and Qualities, entirely abolish'd the Ostracism; soon after *Hyperbolus* was kill'd at Samos, and his Carcass thrown into the Sea.

(10) *Eupolis* wrote his Come-

dy of *Marica* against *Hyperbolus*.

(11) *Eupolis* wrote a Piece, wherein he would have persuad'd the Audience, that he made the Play of *The Knights*, and had given it to *Aristophanes*.

(12) *Phrynicus*, to make his Audience laugh, introduc'd in one of his Plays an old *Andromeda*, who was to be devour'd by a Sea Monster, from which *Eupolis* borrow'd his Idea of the old Damsel he introduce'd in his Comedy, call'd *Marica*, to disguise the Thefts he had made out of *Aristophanes's Knights*. *Phrynicus* was a Comick Poet, contemporary with *Aristophanes*. There was another of this Name, a Writer of Tragedy, and the Schollar of *Thespis*.

(13) This was the same Comick Poet who wrote against *Perecles*.

Dramatis Personæ.

Strepsiades, an old Villager incumbered with Debts.

Phidippides, his Son.

Dromo, Boy to Strepsiades.

Socrates, the Philosopher.

Chærephon, his Friend.

Cenagoras, a Disciple of Socrates.

Chorus of Clouds.

Justice.

Injustice.

Pasias, } *Two Creditors of Strepsiades.*
Amynias, }

Witnesses, Servants, &c.

THE



THE CLOUDS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE Strepsiades's House; at some small distance the House of Socrates, and at the bottom part of the Scene a Prospect of Villages, Forests, Mountains, &c.

Strepsiades and Phidippides discover'd in two Truckle-Beds.

STREPSIADES.

EIGH ho! — My God, what a damn'd Length the Nights are of! will it never be Day-light again? I have heard the Cock crow above these two Hours, and my Rascals lie snoring still as if it were Midnight!---- They did not dare to serve me thus in quieter Times, but a Curse on this War, for a hundred Reasons, but for nothing more than that it prevents me



(14) from giving these hulking Dogs a little wholesome Discipline! --- And this goodly Son of mine, is he one whit more wakeful than the rest of them? but lies snoring as loud as they, and roul'd up in ten sets of Blankets. --- Let me try, if covering my self up in my Bed, I can bear a Bobb with their Nose Instruments; --- but, alas! 'tis not to be done; I am so tormented with my Cares, that I cannot compose my self to Sleep: The Expences I am obliged to be at, the Horses that I must keep, and all the Debts that I have contracted for this notable Son of mine, will not suffer me to close my Eyes. And what vexes me still more, his whole Thoughts even in his Sleep are taken up with dressing his Steeds, and making his Running-matches; while I am tortur'd with the Anxiety of Interest going on, (15) the Moon just in her Wain, and the Day of Payment almost staring me in the Face. Ho! Within there--- *Dromo*, light up my Lamp and give me my Account-book, I'll take a Survey of my Debts. There's 12*l.* to *Pasias*. --- How, 12*l.* to *Pasias*? What could it be for? O, 'twas when I bought the last Crupper-mark'd Jennet. Dotard that I was, why did not I pluck out one of my Eyes rather!

Phidip. talking in his Sleep.] Ha! *Philo*, that's foul play; why, you cross me in my Ranks.

Strepsi. O the Devil! the Devil! here's what has ruin'd me; now does he dream himself at a Horse-race!

Phidip. still asleep.] How many Courses are those War-Chariots to make?

Strepsi. By my Faith, you course your poor Father quite out of his Senses. But let me consider, what Debt stands

(14) The *Athenians* were then at War with the *Lacedaemonians*, and therefore they durst not chastize their Slaves, for fear of their running over to *Lacedamon*.

(15) In *Greece* they lent out Money at Interest by the Month, and all Interest was to be cleared on the last Day of the Moon.

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next to that of *Pasias*? Three Pounds to *Amynias* for Chariot-wheels.—

Phidip. still asleep.] Face that Horse round a little upon the Sand, and then carry him home.

Strepſi. You have very near pac'd me, good Gentleman, out of House and Home; for I am up to the Ears in Debt, and shall soon have all my Goods feiz'd for their Security.

Phidip. waking.] What is the meaning, Sir, that you are thus restless, and have done nothing but tumble and toss all Night long?

Strepſi. The Apprehension of a (16) Bayliff at my Elbow, frights me out of my Slumbers, and almost out of my Bed.

Phidip. Pho! — Give over such Fears, and let me have a little Sleep.

Strepſi. O, pray Sleep by all means; but take notice that all my Debts shall fall upon you: Ah! the Devil confound that Witch of a Match-maker that coupled me to thy Mother! — Before that, I liv'd in my Farm with Ease and Satisfaction, wore my Cloaths without consulting of Fashions, could sleep on a bare Board, had my Hives of Bees, my Flocks of Sheep, and my Olive-grounds: But since I was Fool enough to take an Expensive Woman from the City; in short, the Grandchild of (17) Mega-

(16) I have translated this according to our Customs now; the Greek mentions a Δῆμαρχός, or Tribune of the People; he was the Principal Officer of every Borough, took care to enter all the Debts of his Parishioners, kept a Register of them, and when any one refus'd to pay, made him give Pawns, or other Security.

(17) The House of the Alcmeonida was the most illustrious

in Athens; it had in it three of the Name of Megacles; the first was the Father of Alcmeon, who married his Daughter to Pisistratus: The second was the Son of that Alcmeon, who married Agarista, the Daughter of Clisthenes, Tyrant of Sicyon; and had by her two Sons Hipocrates, and Clisthenes. The third Megacles was the Son of this Hipocrates, and the Brother of that Agarista, who being married to

cles of the Great Megacles! more nice and ambitious than the stately (18) *Casura*, I that was a good plain Villager, have not had a good Hour to boast of: When we were married and went to Bed together, I smelt of my Vineyard, my Fruits, my Sheep-sheering, and Husbandry: She, for her part, of strong Essences, Orangerie Snuff, Coquetry, Luxury, and high feeding: I will not say she was altogether Idle, truly she took more pains than I would have had her;--so that I would shew her my Cloaths sometimes and cry My Dear, you follow the busness too hard; this Coat will serve me, and I desire no better.

Enter Dromo.

Dromo. Sir, we have no Oil in the Lamp.

Strepſi. Rascal, isn't it your own fault? Come hither, and let me pull your Ears soundly.

Dromo. For what, Sir?

Strepſi. Because you put too big a Wick, Varlet, that has drunk up all the Oil. [Ex. *Dromo.*] When the young Gentleman, my Son, was come into the World, my Spouse and I had a great Debate, torsooth, how we should call him. She was for your sounding Names, such as *Xantippus*, *Charippus*, or *Callipides*, and still run upon the *hippus* or *ippides*, that he might at least have some pretence to Horsemanship. I would have had him call'd *Pheidonides* after his Grandfather: Well, 'twas a long Controversie, we at length met one another half way, and agreed that half of his Name should be taken from my Father, and the rest from those great Names of her Fancy, and so we call'd him *Pheid-ippides*. His Mother would fondle and take him by the Hand, telling him, My Son, when you grow up, you must make one at the Chariot-races,

Xantippus became the Mother of *Pericles*. *Aristophanes* probably speaks of the last *Megacles*, and then consequently *Strepſiades* married a Sister of *Pericles*.

(18) She was the most lofty

and supercilious Woman of *Athenes*, she was the Daughter of the first *Megacles*, who married her to the Tyrant *Pisistratus*. The Wife of *Strepſiades* was the Great Grandchild of this *Casura*.

be

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be dress'd in a Purple Robe, and enter the City in Triumph like your Uncle *Megacles*. — I would cry to him, Son, when you grow up, you shall do like your Father, bring up your Cows of an Evening, and be wrap'd about with a good Leather Jerkin! — But he would never follow my Counsels, he went Mad after Horses and Jockeying, and has intirely ruin'd me. Now I have been all this Night plaguing my self for some Expedient to deliver me from my Troubles, and at length I have nick'd it infallibly; and if I can but bring him into this Project, it must take. I must wake him forthwith. But how shall I do to rowse him agreeably? *Phidippides!* — Son! *Phidy-Phidy*, — wake my little *Phidippides*!

Phidip. What is your Pleasure, Father?

Strepſſi. Kiss me, my Boy, and give me your Hand.

Phidip. Well, Sir, 'tis there; What is your Pleasure?

Strepſſi. Tell me a little, do you love me, Child?

Phidip. I do love you by *Neptune*, the Tamer of Horses!

Strepſſi. Oh! — pray no more of that Horse-taming Deity; he has been the worst Friend I have: But if you do heartily love me, Son, follow my Directions.

Phidip. What Directions would you have me follow?

Strepſſi. Change your manner of living, my Boy; and learn something that I can tell you of.

Phidip. What would you have me learn?

Strepſſi. But will you do it then?

Phidip. Most certainly, Sir.

Strepſſi. Come rowze thee then, and mind me: (*Phidip.* gets up.) Do you observe that little Door, and that little House that belongs to it?

Phidip. I do, Sir; but pray what of that?

Strepſſi. That is the Mansion of Contemplation to those great Philosophers, those wise Spirits that prove to us that the Heavens are a large (19) Furnace which incloses us on

(19) Aristophanes attributes to Philosophy in general the Sentiment of the Philosopher *Hippon*; for it was he that first

every side, and that we are the Coals and Fuel of it; These mighty Men, for a small spill of Money, teach to plead and carry Causes, whether right or wrong.

Phidip. Who are they?

Strepsi. I cannot be very punctual as to their Names; but they are a very honest sort of People, and very full of Thought and Meditation.

Phidip. Ah, Pox! I know your Men, Sir. Your Mystical-talking, hagged-fac'd, bare-footed Tribe of Animals, that have the hair-brain'd *Sophocles* and his good Friend *Cherephon* at their Head.

Strepsi. Hift! hift! hold your peace, Boy, and don't prate foolishly. But if you have any regard for your Father's good, leave off your Horse-racing Trade, and become one of them.

Phidip. By *Bacchus* I wouldn't do it, tho' I were to eat nothing but Pheasants like (20) *Leogoras*.

Strepsi. I beseech you, my Son, whom I love above all Mankind; permit your self to be instructed.

Phidip. Instructed! in what?

Strepsi. Why, tis said, they teach two distinct sorts of Rhetorick, one of a better strain, the other more corrupt in its kind; by which we are accomplish'd to obtain Causes of never such Injustice! Now if you will make your self a Master of this latter Dialect, I shall not need to pay one Farthing of all those Debts I have contracted on your Account.

Phidip. I cannot comply to these Measures. For if I were once to grow so pale and lean as that Fraternity, I should never be able to look in the face of my Comrades again.

said the Heaven was a Furnace,
c. Crates the Comick Poet has
play'd on it in his Comedy
call'd *Panopta*.

(20) *Leogoras* was so luxur-
ious and choice in his Dyet,
that he bred up Pheasants for

his own Table. He maintain'd
the same Character at *Athena*
as *Lucullus* did at *Rome*; and
Plato, the Comedian, has rul-
led him on this Account in
one of his Comedies.

Strepsi.

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Strepsi. Then, by *Ceres*, you shall never eat a Morsel at my Cost again; nor your Pads, and Saddle Horses: — Therefore quit the House, and go take your Maintenance with the Crows, if you please.

Phidip. But the great *Megacles* will not let me go without Horses; I'll go to Him; and I don't care an half-penny. — [Exit Phidippides.]

Strepsi. Tho' I have fail'd in this Attempt, I will not be altogether disheart'ned. But, invoking the Gods to my Aid, will go to the Academy my self, and study their Curiosities. But being a tardy, forgetful old Sot, how shall I comprehend the Subtleties of their great Learning? But why should I distrust my own Parts? I'll e'en knock. Young Man! why young Gentleman! —

[Knocks, and *Cenagoras* appears above.]

Cenag. Who's that knocks below there? with a plague to you —

Strepsi. I am *Strepsiades*, the Son of *Phidon*, of the Burrough of *Cicynna*.

Cenag. You are a stupid old Dunce, by Jove, to come pounding with your Heels at the Door without any manner of Fore-sight or Con-consideration: — You have made me lose a Thought I had in my Head, with your confounded thumping.

Strepsi. Excuse me, Dear Sir, for I come a great way. But pray tell me, what Thought did I make you lose?

Cenag. I must not communicate those Affairs, but to Disciples.

Strepsi. You may deliver to me without scruple, for I come hither on purpose to be a Disciple.

Cenag. Then I may disclose; but you must look on these things as *Mysteries*. Just now a little Flea bit *Charephon* by the Brow, and from thence leap'd upon *Socrates*'s Head; upon which *Socrates* started the Question to *Charephon*, how many lengths of her own Feet, he thought, that little Beast could leap at once.

Strepsi. But how was it possible to measure?

Cenag.

Cenag. With a great deal of ease. He caused a little Wax to be melted, and having caught the Flea, dip'd her Feet into it; and as the Wax grew cold, the Flea was found to have Boots on, which when taken off, they without any trouble measur'd the space of her Leap.

Strepſi. Bless me, what a prodigious Subtlety of Conceit was this!

Cenag. You would be much more surpriz'd, if I should tell you another nice Discovery of *Socrates*.

Strepſi. What can it be? Pray oblige me with telling of it.

Cenag. *Charephon* having ask'd him, whether the Buzz of a Gnat proceeded from its Throat or its Breech—

Strepſi. What Solution did he give of the point?

Cenag. He told him, that this little Animal has an Intestine very strait, and that the Wind passing with great Violence, it of Necessity follows that the Backside of the Gnat should make this Noise.

Strepſi. Then the Backside of a Gnat is a notable Trumpet! Oh, the charming Discovery! How happy is he that was the Inventor of it! And with what Dexterity might a Defendant baffle his Judgment, that did but know the Dimensions of a Gnat's Posterior!

Cenag. Once he was robb'd of a noble Thought by the accident of a Cat.

Strepſi. As how, I pray?

Cenag. As he was observing the Course and Circumference of the Moon, and looking up attentively to Heaven with his Mouth open, a beastly nocturnal Cat, from the top of an House, drop'd her Dung betwixt his very Teeth.

Strepſi. Ha, ha, ha,—how pleas'd I am that the Cat should shit into *Socrates*'s Mouth!

Cenag. Last night,—he had nothing to eat for Supper.

Strepſi. Godfo! and by what means did he procure any?

Cenag.

Cenag. Why, bending a Spit, he went to the Wrestling School; and there scattering some (21) fine Ashes on a Table, he set himself to making some Geometrical Figures: And when the gaping Youths lent round the Table, and had their Eyes fix'd on his Compas, he, with his crooked Spit, slyly drew down one of the Coats that hung on the Wall.—

Strepſi. After this, how can we admire the wise (22) Thales? Come, come, directly open your Shop of Meditation, and let me immediately see the Great Socrates: I am even Mad for his Instruction: Come, open at once:— [Cenagoras opens the Academy, and the Philosophers are discover'd in several Postures.] O Hercules! what are all these Animals?

Cenag. Whence proceeds your Admiration? And to what do you take them to be like?

Strepſi. To the Prisoners of War we took at (23) Pylos, belonging to the Lacedamonians: But why do they look upon the Ground thus?

Cenag. They search for what it has in its Bosom.

Strepſi. They search for Onions and Roots then. Good Gentlemen, don't be so concern'd in this Affair, I can help you to numbers of fine ones.—But what do they do, that bend down so zealously?

(21) 'Twas the Custom to make all Geometrical Figures on Sand or Dust, which was sprinkled on a Table.

(22) He was one of the wise Men of Greece, by Birth of Miletus, and lived in the Time of Crœsus.

(23) There were three Towns, called Pylos in Peloponessus; Pylos of Erit, upon the River Perneus; Pylos of Nestor, upon the River Amithus; and Pylos of Messene at the lower part of Peloponessus, and right over against the Island Sphacteria; Aristote-

phanes speaks of the last, and the three hundred Prisoners that Cleon brought to Athens, amongst whom there were 26 Spartans. These poor Wretches were very lean, and out of Case thro' the scanty Provision that their General Epitadus allow'd, that he might be able to hold out the Siege the longer; and through the long Imprisonment they had suffe'red at Athens, which had been three Years when this Comedy was play'd,

Cenag.

Cenag. They make Disquisitions into the very Centre,
Strepsi. But why are their Backsides planted towards the
 Heavens?

Cenag. O, for the sake of learning Astronomy.—But
 come in, for fear *Socrates* should find you here.—

[Speaking to some of the Philosophers.]
Strepsi. No, no, don't let them go in yet; let them
 stay 'till I have communicated a small Affair to them.

Cenag. But they cannot stay so long in the Air.

[*Strepsiades enters with Cenagor.*]

Strepsi. For Gods sake what are these?

Cenag. That is Astronomy.

Strepsi. And that?

Cenag. Geometry.

Strepsi. But what use is it for?

Cenag. For the measuring of the Earth.

Strepsi. What? that which is parcel'd out after a
 Victory?

Cenag. Oh! no; the whole Universal Globe.

Strepsi. Ay, indeed; you please me mighty well with
 this matter: What, shall we have the whole Globe shar'd
 out then? What a prodigious Advantage will this Inven-
 tion be to People!

Cenag. Here is the Round of the whole Earth now;
 d'ye see? Here lies *Athens*.

Strepsi. What do you mean by that? I don't believe a
 word of it, for I can't see one Judge sitting on a Bench
 there.

Cenag. It is very true however, and here is the whole
 Territory of *Attica*.

Strepsi. And whereabouts then are my Townsmen the
Cincinnians?

Cenag. Why there; and here is *Eubœa*; observe what
 an extent that Island has.

Strepsi. I know it; our (24.) *Pericles* took out a very

(24.) There is a world of Actions and Dullness of this old
 pleasantness in the Misconstru- | Villager. Cherephon talks of the
 severe

The CLOUDS. 15

severe Extent against that Land. But where is Laceda-
mon?

Cenag. Here.

Strepſi. God's my Life! 'tis within a Finger's breadth
of us: Take care by all means to shove it a good way
off.

Cenag. That's impossible.

Strepſi. So much the worse for you. But pray tell
me, who is that aloft yonder perch'd in a Wicker
Basket?

Cenag. 'Tis he himself.

Strepſi. What he himself?

Cenag. Socrates.

Strepſi. Socrates? Good now call to him as loud as you
can for me.

Cenag. No, call to him your self; I am not at leisure.

[Ex. Cenagoras.

Strepſi. Hem! —— Hem! —— Socrates! Why, little So-
cates!

Socrates from above.] What would'ſt thou, Mortal
Caitiff?

Strepſi. First and foremost tell me what you're a doing:

Socra. I Expatriate in the Fields of Air, and contemplate
the Sun.

Strepſi. And so aloft in your Basket, you despise the
Gods. But be free with me, when you are here on Earth,
your Thoughts are not so elevated?

Socrat. 'Tis most strictly true; I never so thoroughly
penetrated into the Celestial Operations, till I had thus ex-
alted my Intellectuals, and rarified my Animal Spirits by
this free and homogeneous Communication with the pu-
rer Air: For being on the Earth, and attempting the Con-

Largeness and Extent of Embas; the Appearance of this Com-
and Strepſiades understands by dy, Pericles had brought Embas
the Word Extent, the severe into Subjection, and the Poet
Taxes that Country was loaded here reproaches the Athenians
with. Twenty four Years before with their Avarice and Exactions.

temptation of these high Notions, it is impossible to make any clear Discovery; for in spite of all we can do, the Earth attracts to herself the Effluvia and vivid Exhalations of the Spirits; as your *Nasturtium* does the same by every thing near it.

Strepsi. How! Does your *Nasturtium* attract the vivid Exhalations of the Spirits to itself: Prithee, my little dear *Socrates*, come down from your Altitudes, and give me a little Insight into the Things I came about.

Socrat. And what did you come about?

[Here Socrates lets himself down in the Basket.]

Strepsi. I would be taught a Spice of Rhetorick; for I am involved with my Debts, and furiously tormented by my Creditors, and every Day am oblig'd to give them Pawns and Securities.

Socrat. Why, could you grow indebted to such a Degree, and not be sensible how it went with you?

Strepsi. O I was taken with a violent Fit of a Horse-malady; a most consuming Distemper. Therefore teach me with all Expedition one of your Slights, by which I may make it appear, that how deep so ever I am in Debt, I don't owe a Copper Farthing in the World: And I protest by the Gods, I will satisfie you to your Heart's Content.

Socrat. But by what Gods do you swear? for, you must understand by the way, that with us your (25) Gods are not good Standard.

Strepsi. How do you swear then? By your Iron Coin, as the People of *Byzantium* do?

Socrat. Would you be thoroughly instructed in the Celestial Sciences?

Strepsi. Yes, by Jove, if there are such things.

(25) Aristophanes hereby gives a lift to the Accusation made against Socrates, that he denied the Gods of Athens, and introduced the Worship of new and unknown Deities. Socrates answers to this in the *Apology of Plato*.

Socrat.

Socrat. Would you hold Discourse with the Clouds, our
(26) Goddesses?

Strepſiſ. O yes, I ſhall be pleased above all things with
it.

Socrat. Very well then, ſit you down on this Conſecra-
ted Couch.

Strepſiſ. Ay, with all my Heart.

[Sits down.

Socrat. Take this Garland.

Strepſiſ. Why that Garland? Dear Socrates, you don't
mean to make an (27) *Athamas* of me, and cut my
Throat?

Socrat. O, be not frightened; these are Ceremonies that
must be comply'd with by all that are initiated to our
Mysteries.

Strepſiſ. But what Good shall I get by all this?

Socrat. You ſhall grow more practis'd and beaten in
your Affairs, if you will be but patient, than an old Trav-
eller in his Road.

[Socrat. claps ſeveral Stones on Strepſiades's Head by way
of Ceremony.

Strepſiſ. Yes, by Jove, if this rugged Institution were to
hold long, I ſhould be more beaten and bruised too in
my Affairs than I am fond of being.

Socrat. Reverend old Sir, you muſt now obſerve a pro-
found Silence, and with all your Attention listen to my
Invocation.—Thou Infinite and Unmeasurable Air,
Great King, who keepeft the Earth ſuspended, and gird'ſt
it round on every ſide! Thou Bright Aether, and ye aw-
ful Goddesses, the Clouds! ye formidable Mothers of the

(26) Aristophanes making So-
crates ſay that the true Deities
with the Philosophers are the
Clouds, would infinuate that
their Knowledge is but Smoke
and Wind.

(27) Strepſiades here alludes
to a Tragedy of Sophocles call'd

Athamas, in which that King
was repreſented ſtanding near
an Altar, with a Garland on
his Head, and going to be Sa-
crificed; but Hercules came in
the Nick, and rescued him from
that Danger.

Thunder,

Thunder, gather your selves, and appear transparent to him that wishes to be your Disciple.

Strepsi. Hold, hold, don't be too hasty I beseech you. I must first put my Coat double on my Head, least their Dew been't too much for me. What an unlucky Dog was I, that I did not bring something extraordinary to wrap my self in.

Socrat. Advance ye honoured Clouds, and present your selves to his Eyes, whether now you are on the Icy Summit of Divine Olympus, whether you are dancing with the Nymphs in the Gardens of the Ocean your Sire, or drawing up the Water in your Golden Urns at the Mouths of Nyle: In fine, whether you are at the Marsh of Maotis, or on the Top of Mimas, cover'd with Eternal Snow, O hear my Oraisons, and receive our Sacrifices with Favour.

[Here the Chorus of Clouds descend, consisting of Women dress'd in Habits of the brightest Colours, (28) who sing as they come down in their Machines.

Socrat. Most venerable Clouds! You have most evidently heard my Pray'rs: And did not you, Neighbour, hear their Divine Voices, and the rattlings of the (29) Thunder?

Strepsi. O, I reverence the great Goddesses, and am so terrified with the Rumblings they have made, that I must needs give 'em a Salvo of my Counter-Thunder; I don't know whether it is altogether so respectful as it should be, but it has work'd so potently on my Faculties, that I must e'en let fly, do what I can.

Socrat. Be not too jocular and vile, like our Poultry Comedians that dawb their Faces with Elder-berries; but

(28) I have ventured to leave out whatever the Chorus sings in the Acts, as well as the Intermedes at the end of the Acts; because I conceived such Odes would relish but ill in an

English Comedy.

(29) They had behind their Scenes a great Brazen Vessel filled with Stones, which they employ'd in their Plays to imitate the Thunders.

give Attention; for the Sacred Train delight in singing much.

[Here the Chorus sing again.]

Strepsi. In the Name of Wonder, Socrates, I beg you to tell me who are these rare Women that sing so curiously, are they some Heroines?

Socrates. No, they are the Celestial Clouds, the Great Deities of the Unactive: They are the Divinities which give us Knowledge, Sense and Eloquence; that teach us the prodigious things which we utter! Those great Circumlocutions, those Paradoxes, and all the incredible and surprizing things that we invent.

Strepsi. As soon as ever I heard 'em, my very Heart leap'd with Joy; I burn with Impatience to learn their most subtle Arguments, to Philosophize it on the Leg of a Flea, to reason upon Smoke, to oppose Argument to Argument; and always confound the Premisses. I passionately desire to have a Sight of these Goddesses, if it be possible.

Socrates. Cast your Eyes this way towards Mount (30) Parneta; for I see the Goddesses come sweetly sailing along.

Strepsi. Where, I beseech you? Shew me.

Socrates. See there, in a great Company; they come a-slaunt by the Vallies and the Forrests.

Strepsi. What can be the reason that I cannot have a glimpe of them?

Socrates. See, they are just at hand.

Strepsi. I scarce yet begin to discern them.

Socrates. You cannot fail of seeing them, unless you are Stone Blind.

Strepsi. Oh, now I certainly see them, for they fill the whole Room. Ye great and venerable Goddesses!

Socrates. Did you not know, and believe they were such?

(30) We must not confound Mountains, the first in Attica, Parneta with Parnassus, they the other in Phocis, are the Names of different

Strepsi.

Strepſiſ. No, I protest; I look'd upon them only to be a Fog and a Dew, and a gloomy Shadow.

Socras. You did not know then that they feed your Sophisters, Fortune-tellers, Physicians, your Effeminate-dressing-Coxcombs, Dithyrambick-Musick-Spoilers, your Men that labour after new-coin'd Words of Sound, but Emptiness; for they Compose in Honour of these Goddesses.

Strepſiſ. 'Tis upon this Account they have called them (31) Your moving Mountains wafted by the Winds! Ætherial, liquid Birds that swim in Air; And Show'rs, the Tears distill'd from Dewy Clouds! — and all that. — Don't they deserve to be fed with Woodcocks and Butter'd Salmon for these Noble Flights?

Socras. Nothing more reasonable.

Strepſiſ. But pray, inform me; if these are really Clouds, how comes it that they so nearly resemble Women, and yet are not so?

Socras. What are they then?

Strepſiſ. I cannot say positively, but I think they are like great Flocks of Wooll whirling along in the Air; and by my Troth, not a jot like Women: These however have good lusty Noses.

Socras. Now answer me a Question, or so.

Strepſiſ. Come on, put your Queries.

Socras. In looking upon the Sky have you never seen a Cloud resemble a Centaur, a Leopard, a Wolf, or a Bull?

Strepſiſ. Ay, a thousand times at leaſt; well, what does that imply?

Socras. They assume whatever Shapes they think fit. If they see one of your Savages with long Hair and a shaggy Tail, like the Son of (32) Xenophontes, to deride his Madness, they take the Form of Centaurs.

(31) These starch'd Lines
the Poet introduces by way of
Raillery to the Dithyrambick
Poets, Cynegias, Philoxenus, and

Cleomenes.

(32) This was Hieronymus
the Dithyrambick Poet.

Strepſiſ.

Strepsi. And when they see (33) *Simon* that has robb'd the Republick, what do they then?

Socrat. To describe his Nature and Manners, they change themselves into Wolves.

Strepsi. Ho! ho! then it was by the same Reason yesterday that when they saw (34) *Cleonymus*, they turn'd themselves into Stags.

Socrat. And at this Instant do you observe? Because they see (35) *Clitophenes*, they are transformed into Women.

Strepsi. Good Morrow to you, worthy Goddesses, I kill your Hands; and if you have ever vouchsafed to break Silence at the Request of a Mortal, I conjure you to shew me the same Grace, and give me a Taste of your sweet Voices.

Chorus. Good Morrow to you, old Gentleman, that have been so long on Earth, and yet hunt after Wisdom: And likewise to Thee, thou Master of the most subtle Trifles, tell us what you would request, for of all the Sophists that Discourse of Meteors, thou and (36) *Prodicus* are the only Ones we are fond of obliging. *Prodicus*, because of his Great Wisdom and nice Accomplishments; and Thee, because thou traversest the Streets with a lofty and Majestic Air, throwing thy Eyes from one side to the other;

(33) This *Simon* was a Sophister, and a Collector of the Subsidies; *Eupolis* in one of his Plays has reproached him with Thefts, and particularly accuses him of robbing the Treasure of *Heracles*.

(34) *Cleonymus* had in some Engagement thrown away his Buckler; and all the Poets of that time took care to have a fling at him for the Cowardice.

(35) This *Clitophenes* was one

of the principal Men of Athens, much inveigh'd against for his Effeminacy and soft Course of Life.

(36) Aristophanes has no design here of praising *Prodicus*, but he does it the more to encourage *Socrates*, in setting him on the level with this Sophist of Creos, who was so vain and conceited of his own Knowledge, that he would not communicate the least Trifle grain.

that

that thou often submittest to walk barefoot, and viewest us with Respect and Honour.

Strepsi. Great *Jove!* What Harmony of Voice! How awful and prodigious!

Socrat. These alone are Goddesses; and all besides is Foolery and Nonsense.

Strepsi. But Olympian *Jove*, pray tell me is not he like wife a God?

Socrat. What *Jove!* Don't harbour such Impertinences, for there is no such thing as *Jove*.

Strepsi. What do you say! How have we our Rain then? Pray satisfie me to that Scruple:—

Socrat. From these Goddesses, and I'll prove it to you by substantial Reasons. Give me leave; Who ever saw Rain without Clouds? If it were that God which made it Rain, we then must have Showers in serene and clear Weather.

Strepsi. You have touch'd this Matter with a great deal of Nicety; and till I heard your Arguments, I thought verily that, whenever it rain'd, *Jove* had piss'd through a Sieve. But inform me who is it that Thunders, 'tis a thing that scares me most terribly.

Socrat. 'Tis these Clouds that make that Noise in their rowling.

Strepsi. By what means, thou most advent'rous Man!

Socrat. When they are full of Water, and that, hanging in the Air, they can no longer support their own Gravity, of Consequence they must fall one on the other, and burst asunder: And 'tis this forcible Shock that makes the Noise we hear.

Strepsi. But is it not *Jove* that constrains them to fall, and burst asunder?

Socrat. No; 'tis the (37) Aetherial Impulse.

(37) Aristophanes attributes this Opinion to Socrates with some Probability, as it was the Sentiment of Anaxagoras, who was the Master of Socrates.

Strepsi. Aetherial Impulse! — By Jingo, that's a Deity I never heard of before. What, and so there is no *Jove*, but Aetherial Impulse governs in his stead? However you have not thoroughly convinc'd me about this same Thunder and its rattling.

Socrates. You have not thoroughly comprehended what I said. I tell you that the Clouds being replete with Water, and falling one upon the other, make that rumbling by reason of their Condensitry.

Strepsi. Pray, how can I be brought to the belief of this?

Socrates. I'll make you understand it, by your own Body. At the time of our General Feast, when you have over-stuffed your self with Soup, if you do but stir your Belly, is there not an immediate Croaking in your Guts?

Strepsi. Oh yes, by *Phœbus*, a most Notorious Rumbling and Combustion. The Provant, that swells me out, makes a terrible hollow Report, and for all the World like Thunder: And not to dissemble the matter, Poop! goes my Belly first, and then Poop-ate-poop! And when I go to discharge the Cause of this Tempestuous Doings, cut it flies with a surprising force, exactly as from these Goddesses.

Socrates. Well then, collect a little, that if so much Noise can issue from so small a Concavity as your Belly, how much more terribly ought the Air to resound, whose Extent is so vast. You see the whole Difference lies in Magnitude and Proportion.

Strepsi. But, pray now, whence proceeds the Lightning that we see flash, that burns us when we are struck, and that sometimes does but lightly touch us? For it seems Demonstration to me, that *Jove* darts it on the Impious and Perjur'd.

Socrates. Why, thou foolish frantick old Sot! If *Jove* darted the Lightning on the Impious and Perjur'd, would he not have burnt *Simon*, *Cleonymus* and *Theorus* to a Cinder? On the contrary, 'tis on the very Temples of this

Deity

Deity that it most frequently falls, on the Consecrated Promontory of *Sunium*, or the tallest Oaks. And wherefore is this, when an Oak is neither Impious nor Perjur'd?

Strepsi. I cannot tell, but I think your Reasons have much Probability. But what is this same Lightning?

Socrat. When a dry Wind is lock'd up in a Cloud, and blows it up like a Bladder, it in the end splits the Cloud by its Vehemence, bursts out with Impetuosity, and is set on Fire by the Rapidity of its own Motion.

Strepsi. By my Soul, I have had Experience of that very Effect, and did not think of it. One time during the Feast of *Jupiter*, as I was broiling the Entrails of a Victim for my whole Family, and having put them on the Fire without opening, immediately the Wind that was in one of the Guts grew hot, burst its way out, puffed in my Eyes, and scalded all one side of my Face.

Socrat. O Thou that art Ambitious like us of acquiring Knowledge and Wisdom, how happy shalt thou be amongst the Greeks and Athenians, if thou hast but Memory and Application, and can'st but undergo the Fatigue? If you are neither tir'd with standing nor walking, if you can bear Heat and Cold, never make a Concern of Dinner-Time, if you can abstain from Wine, bodily Exercise, and the other Impertinencies of the World; in short, if you are entirely convinc'd, as a Man of Sense ought to be, that nothing is more glorious than to vanquish your Adversaries by the force of your Eloquence.

Strepsi. If you were to look out for one of Resolution, of Patience to bear Pain and Labour, and could know how to live on a Flint, you would need to give yourself no further trouble, but I am your Man; there is no Individual thing that you may not do with me; if you would make an Anvil of my Back, 'tis entirely at your Service.

Socrat. You will not believe then for the future that there are any other Deities but those we acknowledge, that is to say, the Chaos, the Clouds and Eloquence?

Strepſis. Depend upon it; and if I were to meet the other Deities in my Walks, I would not so much as speak to 'em, not make 'em the least Sacrifice or Libation, nor so much as offer a Grain of Incense to them.

Chor. Inform us then with Boldness what you would have, for if you honour and admire us, and study to become a Learned Man, we will refuse you no Request.

Strepſis. Most mighty Goddesses! Vouchsafe me then immediately a little trifling Boon I have to beg, which is, that I may surpass all the Greeks in Eloquence by an hundred Leagues.

Chor. We grant it; and from this Moment there shall not be an Orator in *Athens* that shall plead Causes of the greatest Moment comparable to You.

Strepſis. Nay, as for Causes of the greatest Moment, I am not very solicitous about them: but only in matters that relate to my self I would have the Skill to pervert the Law and evade my Creditors.

Chor. Your wishes are not Extravagant, they shall be answer'd; only submit your self to the Discipline of our Servants, and obey them.

Strepſis. I will do as you command, for my Necessity obliges me; and what with my Horses and my Wedlock I am absolutely undone. From this Instant let them do what they will with me; I give my self up to their Tuition, to be drub'd, starv'd, choak'd, cloath'd in Tatters, nip'd with the Frost, or scorch'd from Head to Foot, so that I need not pay my Debts. — And tho' every one that meets me in the Street, are pleas'd to call me Insolent, prating Fool, Brazen-faced, Impudent, infamous Lyar, forger of Words, crafty Fox, wicked, hypocritical, rascally, Gallows-look'd, impious, ill-meaning old Villain;

they shall have their way, and make a Supper for my Instructors out of my Small guts into the Bargain!

Socrat. This Man is of a stout Heart, and capable of the greatest Attainments.—He is no lazy Saunter, but always ready for Labour: Know then that in learning from me what you covet, you will acquire a Reputation amongst Men, that will lift you up even to the Stars.

Strepsi. What shall come to me then?

Socrat. You shall pass the Remainder of your Days with me, and lead a Life that shall be the Envy of all Mankind.

Strepsi. But when shall I see all this?

Socrat. You shall have every Day at your Door Crowds of People that shall come to Discourse you, to ask your Counsels in Affairs of Perplexity, and that will please you at your Heart.

Chor. But begin to give the good Man a Lesson of your intended Instruction; sound his Capacity, and examine what he is fit for.

Socrat. Come on then; let me into your Humour a little; that having a more perfect Knowledge of you, I may see what new Machines I must make use of.

Strepsi. What do you talk of Machines, do you design to take me by Storm?

Socrat. No, but I mean to put you to the Question, and see what sort of Memory you have.

Strepsi. Nay, I have two sorts of Memories, by Jove! If any body is in my Debt, I remember it admirably; but if I am in Debt to any body, I have the most treacherous Memory in Nature.

Socrat. Have you any Natural Disposition to Eloquence?

Strepsi. I cannot boast of my Disposition to Eloquence, but I have a notable Disposition to Knavery.

Socrat. How then can you propose to learn?

Strepsi. Don't trouble your self upon that account.

Socrat. Take care, when I discourse to you of sublime things, that you conceive me readily.

Strepsi.

Strepsi. What, must I gobble down the Sciences, as a Dog does his Dinner?

Socrat. What an ignorant blockish Fellow is this! My good Friend, I am strongly afraid you will want a good Drubbing. Hold a little, what would you do, if you were beaten?

Strepsi. Take the beating; which when I had born some time, I would take my Witnesses, and the next Step would be to bring my Action of Battery.

Socrat. Come on; pull off your Coat, Friend.

Strepsi. Have I committed an Error?

Socrat. But 'tis the Custom to enter all naked.

Strepsi. But you may look under my Coat, if I have hid any thing; that (38) I do not come to ransack your House, and search for a Thief.

Socrat. Take it off; why this Trifling?

Strepsi. Pray tell me this tho'; if I am Diligent and Expert at taking my Lessons, which of your Disciples shall I resemble?

Socrat. You will extreamly resemble Charephon.

Strepsi. O the Devil! Then shall I have the Resemblance of one half Dead.

Socrat. No, no; don't be Impertinent, only follow me directly, and haste to Instruction.

(38) It was a Law in Greece, that when a Person was robb'd, and believ'd he had found the place where the Thief was hous'd, he might go and declare that he came to make his search. But as this gave way to many Rogueries, and Opportunities of affronting the Master of the House, by carrying in the Goods thither they pretend'd to look after; the Person that search'd was not to be admitted 'till he entirely strip'd

himself, put on a Napkin round his Loins, or a loose Gown without a Girdle, and took an Oath that he was in some assurance of finding the Thief there: If then he was refus'd Entrance, he might appeal to the Law for his Redress, make an Estimate of his Loss, and the Party Cast was to pay double the Sum of that Estimate. The Romans took this from the Greeks, and call'd it, *Quare per lacent & licium.*

Strepsi. You should give me first a (39) Cake of Honey into my Hand: What horrid Apprehensions have I of entering thither! I can't help thinking, I am going down into *Trophonius's Cave.*

Socrat. Go in; what do you keep such a boggling at the Door?

Chor. Go, pull up a Resolution, and hope the best: May all Prosperity attend this good Man; who, tho' press'd with the burthen of Age, has still strength to apply himself to Knowledge, and Matters that require all the vigour and sprightliness of Youth!

[*Socrates and Strepsiades enter the School; the Chorus sing during the Interval of the Act.*

(39) This Passage is extremely pleasant, but to understand all its Wit, 'tis necessary to know that *Trophonius*, a Man greedy of Glory, built a little Cell in *Bacotia* under Ground, whence he pronounc'd Oracles: This Den was much celebrated throughout *Greece*, and resorted to from every side. After the Death of *Trophonius*, it became only an Harbour for Serpents. The Superstitious Vulgar believ'd these Serpents to be the Soul of the deceas'd Prophet, and continued to go thither with the same Devotion. But those that went down into the Den took care to carry Cakes of Honey with them; which they threw to the Serpents for

their own Security. Now *Ariophanes* here compares *Socrates* to *Trophonius*, his House to the Den of that false Prophet, his Disciples to the Serpents that fill'd it; and *Strepsiades* wants an Honey Cake, to protect himself from the Meagre Students: There is one thing more remarkable of this Den, that those who had been once in it, were never seen to laugh for the future; this occasion'd a Proverb, which was applicable on such as look'd Chagrin and in an ill Humour, He's just come from *Trophonius's Den*: This still adds to the pleasantry of this Passage, because of the serious and compos'd Visages of *Socrates* and his Disciples.

A C T . I I . S C E N E . I .

Enter Socrates and Strepsiades.

Socrat. NO! I protest by the Chaos, Air and Respiration, that I never in my Life have seen a Man of equal Grossness and Stupidity; so sottish and forgetful! the most simple and common things that I teach him, he forgets before he has scarce learned: I will not neglect however to call him to the proof. *Strepsiades* come forth, and bring your little Couch with you.

Strepſiſ. I cannot do it for the Furniture that is about it.

Socrat. Make haste, do as I bid you, and attend to my Instruction.

Strepſiſ. I am ready.

Socrat. Come on; What are you for beginning with, and what would you learn, speak; would you be for knowing Measure, or Verse, Harmony or Cadence?

Strepſiſ. O, Measures, by Jingo; for Yesterday the Meal-man with a World of Dexterity cozen'd me of the quantity of two Pecks.

Socrat. This is remote from my Question; I would know of you which Measure appears the most beautiful, the Trimeter, or Tetrameter.

Strepſiſ. Trimeter, or Tet-e-ra-meter! No, by my Soul, I think the three Bushel Measure.

Socrat. This is not an Answer —

Strepſiſ. Not an Answer? Why then you would infer that your Tet-e-ra-meter contains more than three Bushels.

Socrat. Go, hang your self for an Incorrigible old Dull Head! — But perhaps you will sooner learn the Harmony and Cadence?

Strepſiſ. But will your Harmony and Cadence make the Pot boil?

Socrat. They will make you agreeable in Company, and by them you will distinguish which Measure runs in Pyrricks, and which in Dactyls.

Strepsi. But I'm not very fond of these Curiosities.

Socrat. What are you for Learning then?

Strepsi. The Method of making the worst Cause in Nature good, and of rendring black white.

Socrat. But you must learn some other things as Preparatives, grow acquainted with Animals, to know which are the (40) Males.

Strepsi. Pho! —— I must know that directly, if I am not Mad, or a Fool. Your Males are the Ram, the Goat, the Bull, the Dog, the Cock, and all that.

Socrat. You must likewise know the Genders of Nouns, so far as to distinguish the Names of Men from those of Women.

Strepsi. I know particularly well which are Women's Names.

Socrat. Let me have proof of that.

Strepsi. Why *Lucilla*, *Philinna*, *Clitagora*, *Demetria*.

Socrat. And the Men's Names.

Strepsi. I'll tell you a thousand, *Philonenus*, *Melesias*, *Amynias*.

Socrat. O thou most Wretched Ais! These are not Men's Names.

Strepsi. No!

Socrat. No, and to convince you, has (41) *Amynias* ever pass'd for a Man?

(40) Aristophanes does this to rally a Custom with Socrates, which was of running out to things very remote from the Subject he treated of: I have made bold to shorten this Dialogue concerning Masculines and Feminines, because very little diverting in itself, and that like-

wise our Language is not furnish'd with Equivalent Terms to make its Sense intelligible.

(41) This *Amynias* was the Archon for that Year, as has already been remark'd. He was as infamous and effeminate as *Cleonymus*.

Strepſiſ. By my Conſcience, he has not, now I recollect. Because whenever he went to the Army, he would throw away his Buckler —— But wherefore ſhould we amuse our ſelves with what we both ſo well know already?

Socrat. Thou doeft the leaſt in Nature, by Jove; but come, lie down there.

Strepſiſ. To what end?

Socrat. To think and meditate a little on your Affairs.

Strepſiſ. O, nay, if I muſt lie down to meditate, pray let it be upon the Ground.

Socrat. No, I tell you: I muſt have you repoſe on that Couch.

Strepſiſ. What an unlucky Dog am I! What have I done to merit the Perſecution of all thofe Troops of Vermin ⁶⁹⁹ that are incamp'd on that Couch?

Socrat. Compoſe your ſelf to iſtant Meditation, and weigh well whatever preſents itſelf to your Thoughts; turn your ſelf often from one ſide to the other; and if any Notion ſtarts that you cannot eaſily reconcile, and clear to your Imagination, relinquiſh it at once, and endeavour at a Better; but particularly guard againſt Drowsiſſez, nor let the Compoſition of your Mind betray you into a Slumber.

Strepſiſ. Ods-blews! —

Socrat. What ails you? wherefore theſe Outcries?

Strepſiſ. Theſe damn'd Quarrelſome (42) Corinthians make me mad almoſt.

Socrat. Patience, Patience, my Friend.

Strepſiſ. What Patience can I have? They nipp me on the Sides, march about all my Quarters, crawl into my

(42) The Wit of *Strepſiades* in this Paſſage is double; he calls the Fleas and Bugs *Corinthians*, because they were as troublous to him, as the Co-

rinthians at that time were to Athens; and besides this the word *μόρεις*, which ſignifies the Vermin, makes a good part of the *κορίθιοι*, the *Corinthians*.

Trowlers, and almost tease me to Death. Besides, my
(43) Mony's gone, my Blood almost drunk out, my Coat
and Shoes taken away, and to compleat my Misfortunes,
I am half dead with over watching.

Socrat. So-ho there! what are you doing? Won't you
compose your self to Meditation?

Strepſi. By *Neptune*, I am meditating as hard as I
can.

Socrat. And what are your Meditations come to, what
have you thought of?

Strepſi. I have been thinking, whether the Fleas won't
eat me quite up.

Socrat. A pox confound you!

Strepſi. Nay, I am in a confounded way already.

Socrat. You must not be so squeamish and effeminate,
but lye down and pull the Quilt over your Head. Your
Business is to find some Shifts and Stratagems how to de-
fraud your Creditors.

Strepſi. Alas! but how shall I find those Stratagems un-
der this Coverlet?

Socrat. What can he be a doing! Ho, there; what, do
you Sleep?

Strepſi. Not a wink, by *Phœbus*.

Socrat. Have you devis'd nothing yet?

Strepſi. No, by my Soul.

Socrat. What, nothing?

Strepſi. Nothing, as I hope to live.

Socrat. Will you not cover your self over, and find
something?

Strepſi. What would you have me find? Inform me,
Socrates.

Socrat. Inform me, what you would desire to find.

(43) The Poet would insinuate, that *Socrates* had made
the old Man pay well; or that | they had stripp'd him to get
his Mony with his Cloaths.

Strepſi.

Strepſi. I have, I believe at least a thousand times, I would find some Expedient not to pay my Debts.

Socrat. Take Heart then, and cover your self up. Disengage your Thoughts from all Foreign Matter, apply them closely to the Subject in hand, search, examine, and dispose your Contemplations.

Strepſi. Wretch that I am!

Socrat. Lye still and be quiet; if you do not find your account in your first Thought, be not too stiffly wedded to it, but abandon it, and meditate something else; exert your whole Faculties, resume your Ideas, and turn and wrest them till they serve your purpose.

Strepſi. O my dear little *Socrates*.

Socrat. What say'ſt thou, old Man?

Strepſi. By my Faith, I have thought of a fraudulent Stratagem.

Socrat. Let's hear?

Strepſi. Hold, tell me one thing first.

Socrat. What is it?

Strepſi. If I could hire a (44) *Theſſalian* Witch, and by her Art draw down the Moon by Night into my Hand, then clap it into a Case, like a Pocket Looking-glaſs, and keep it close.

Socrat. What Advantage wou'd you draw from thence?

Strepſi. Why if the Moon was never to appear no more, I should pay no more Interest.

Socrat. How so?

Strepſi. Because 'tis paid by the Month; and there could be no more Months, if we had no more Moon.

Socrat. Mighty well! but I'll make you another Proposition more feizable than that. If you were adjudg'd to pay a Fine of five Talents, how would you do to come off from the Payment?

(44) The *Theſſalian* Witches had Power by their Inchantments to draw the Moon and Stars from the Firmament. They were counted the most expert.

Strepsi. How would I do? By Jove, I don't know; but I must consider,

Socrat. Don't cudgel your Brains much about it, but let 'em run a Wooll-gathering again, or send 'em up into the Air, (45) as Children do their Paper Kites to fly at random.

Strepsi. Hold, I have it; now shall you confess that I have found out an apt Evasion of this Fine.

Socrat. Pronounce it.

Strepsi. Have you never seen at the Drugster's that transparent Stone, with which they set Things on Fire.

Socrat. You mean a Burning-Glass.

Strepsi. The very same.

Socrat. And what of that?

Strepsi. Why, I would take one of these Burning-glasses, and when the Register had minuted down my Amercement, I would turn my self thus to the Sun with my Implement, and set his Notes all on Fire.

Socrat. Most deeply thought, I swear by the Graces!...

Strepsi. Ay; it tickles me to think how I should set the Fine and the five Talents all on a Blaze at once.----

Socrat. Come on; and find me an immediate Evasion from this Matter.----

Strepsi. What is it?

Socrat. How to avoid the Sentence of an (46) Appearance in Person, without the Aid of Witnesses to depose in your Behalf for not appearing.

Strepsi. Pho! ---- there's nothing more easie.

Socrat. As how?

(45) Aristophanes would bring into ridicule the Opinion of Socrates, who said that the Spirit or Soul has Wings, and that to soar towards Heaven, it essayes to break the Cords which hold it down to the Body.

(46) When the Party sum-

mon'd did not appear before the Judge at the time appointed, he was fin'd for the Default; and if he did not pay that Fine at the Day limitted, he was to pay it four-fold, and the Plaintiff had an Arrest on his Person.

Strepsi.

Strepſi. As thus. The Day that the Writ is out for my Appearance, I wou'd go directly and hang my ſelf.

Socrat. You trifle strangely. ---

Strepſi. No, by the Gods. Do you think they'd trouble themſelves to prosecute a dead Corps?

Socrat. What an incorrigible Dunce thou art! I'll teach you no more.

Strepſi. For Heaven's Sake, sweet *Socrates*, why ſo?

Socrat. Because you ſo immediately forget what you do learn. To make you ſensible of this, what was it I taught you first? Answer me.

Strepſi. Let me ſee; what was it you taught me first? O, what do you call that ſame thing that we work our Dough in? --- Paw, waugh! --- what do we call it?

Socrat. Be gone, thou moft Ignorant, and forgetful of all old Sots!

Strepſi. Alas! what will become of me? I am loſt without Redemption, if I don't learn to do my Buſineſſ by Tongue-padding. What ſhall I do? ye Venerable Clouds, Counsel me in this Plunge.

Chor. If thou haſt a Son, oīd Man, let him ſupply thy Place; that's our Advice.

Strepſi. Yes, faith, I haue a gallant, handsome Son, but he's not very fond of Discipline: What muſt I do? ..

Chor. But do you let him haue his way?

Strepſi. He thinks of nothing but his Dress and Diyerion. He's one of *Casyra*'s Family, and descended from a Mother of Fashion and Quality: However, I'll go and diſcourse the Matter with him, and if he refuſes to obey me, I am refolv'd to drive him out of Doors. But d'ye hear, *Socrates*, expect me back again in a trice with you.

[Exeunt.

A C T I I I . S C E N E I .

Enter Strepsiades and Phidippides.

Strepsi. NO, by the Clouds, you shall no longer find Harbour under my Roof; but go to your Great extravagant Uncle (47) *Megacles*, and eat the Posts and Pillars of his Palace!

Phidip. Alas! my unhappy Father; what is come to you? Your Wits are certainly diseas'd; disorder'd, by *Olympian Jove*! ---

Strepsi. Look you now, the Fool! By *Olympian Jove*! --- What an extravagant Sot art thou at this Age to believe such a thing as *Jove*? --- ha! ha! ha!

Phidip. You're merry, Sir; but what provokes your Laughter thus?

Strepsi. I laugh to see you such a Baby, and a Fool, and to hear you talk as if you belong'd to another World; but come, give me your Attention, and I'll Instruct you better; I'll teach you such noble Secrets, that if you will learn them, they shall make you truly a Man; but you must be cautious how you communicate them. —

Phidip. What are they, Sir?

Strepsi. You swore but now by *Jove*. ---

Phidip. I did so, Father.

Strepsi. Then learn what it is to know better. Ah, *Phidippides*, depend upon it there is no such one as *Jove*.

Phidip. Who then?

Strepsi. *Jove* has lost his Dominion, and *Aetherial Impulse* now governs in the Skies.

Phidip. Good Gods, what Frenzy's this! ---

(47) The Poet here upbraids *Megacles* with having eat out nothing but his House left him, which was adorn'd with fine all his Substance, and having Columns.

Strepsi. Take it from me that 'tis so.

Phidip. Who is your Master in these profound Notions?

Strepsi. The great *Socrates*, and the learned *Charephon*; that *Charephon* that has measur'd the Length of a Flea's Leg.

Phidip. And are you so far gone in Credulity, Sir, as to be led by those mad fantastical Impostors?

Strepsi. Good Words, *Phidippides*; don't rave unmannerly against those wise and learned Men; Men, that thro' Frugality never shav'd, never were perfum'd, or step'd into a Bagnio in their whole Lives; and you, on the other hand, make Ducks and Drakes of my Substance, as if I were a Thing not in Being. But come, follow me this Instant, and supply my Place in learning the Sciences.

Phidip. Can one learn any thing of Use from those Animals?

Strepsi. Most certainly; the whole System of Knowledge that concerns Mankind. You shall know how ignorant and stupid you have been. But come, attend me hither a little.

Phidip. Great Gods, what should I do; my Father is distracted! — Shall I go prove him a Lunatick in form, and have a Guardian assigned him?

Strepsi. They have taught me a hundred curious Things; but through the Infirmity of my Years I have almost drop'd the Remembrance of them.

Phidip. And for these curious Things, you have lost your Coat?

Strepsi. No, I have converted it towards my Meditations.

Phidip. And your Shoes likewise, thou most besotted Man?

Strepsi. I have employ'd them, (48) like *Pericles*, to ou-

(48) *Plistonax*, King of *Lacera* — a vast Army into *Attica*, *Pericles*, and *Cleander* the *Fa-
cels*, who was not in a Capacity
ther of *Gylippus*, having brought to withstand them with his
publick

Publick Good. But come on, and be not concern'd at making a false Step, since you do it in Obedience to your Father. When you were but an Infant, and could but barely stammer, I studied to oblige you; and I remember, with the first Money that I earn'd at our Assemblies, I bought you a little Chariot (49) at Jupiter's Fair.

Phidip. The time will come that you'll dearly repent all this.

Strepſiſ. Come, you're a good Lad to obey me: So ho! *Socrates,* So ho! ---- I have brought you my Son, whom I have over-perswaded, tho' with much ado.

Enter Socrates.

Socrat. Because it is evident he is a Sot, and that he would never reconcile himself to be hung there all Day long in the Element.

Phidip. Since you love to be hung up so well, 'tis pity you are not so for all together.

Strepſiſ. Go to the Devil, thou Varlet! Dost thou pretend to mock thy Master?

Socrat. Did you see how he screw'd up his Mouth, when he said, 'Tis pity you are not so for all together! ... Pah! how could he learn to draw himself out of a Process, elude the Testimonies of his Adversaries, and win over the Judges to his Favour! — These are not Trifles, and *Hyperbolus* would give a Talent to be Master of 'em.

Forces, corrupted them with Money, and made them withdraw their Troops: In stating his Accounts with *Athens*, he was very particular in his Sums, and for what Use; but when he came to the Monies which he had so given to the *Lacedemonians*, he charg'd so much for the Occasions of the Commonwealth, and the *Athenians* paf'd this Article amongst the rest,

(49) They kept at *Athens* many Festivals in Honour of *Jupiter*, among the rest one they call'd *Διονύσια*, during which all Fathers bought a thousand little Baubles for their Children, and therefore there was then a sort of Fair. The Scholiast says it was kept in *February*, but in the Kalender of Mr. *Rous's* *Archæol. Attic.* it stands on the 19th of *April*.

Strepſiſ.

Strepsi. Don't be prejudic'd at his Impertinence; only teach him, and he has a natural Quickness and Invention: When he was but a little Child, he made a thousand pretty Things, as Castles, and Ships, and Charriots in Leather, and cut Frogs, that you would have thought alive, out of the Skin of a Pomegranet. He was a notable Child, in Sincerity; believe me he will easily take the two sorts of Rhetorick which you teach; if he cannot learn the just Method, he will at least take the unjust one.

Socrat. I will give him to the Tuition of Justice and Injustice, who will take Care of him.

Strepsi. Well, I'll leave you; remember, I beg you, to do all in your Power to make him thoroughly capable of refuting every thing that shall appear Just and Equitable.

[Exit Strepsiades one way; Phidippides goes backwards with Socrates.

Enter Justice and Injustice, brought down in several Machines.

Just. Come hither, descend and shew your self, if you are so daring.

Injust. Be gone, whither thou wilt; for what I shall say will ruin thee in the Thoughts of all the World.

Just. Thou ruin me? Why, what art thou? —

Injust. I am *Injustice*.

Just. And of Consequence much weaker than me.

Injust. Yet tho' you boast of your superior Strength, in all our Controversies the Advantage falls on my side.

Just. What mighty Things do you do then?

Injust. Find out new Devices that never have been thought of by Man.

Just. Devices that are in Vogue only amongst Fools.

Injust. Rather amongst wise Men.

Just. I'll be the utter Confusion of you.

Injust. By what Expedient?

Just. By speaking only what is just.

Injust. But I in a moment will overturn all you say; for first, I insist that there is no such thing as Justice.

Just.

Just. No such thing! ...

Injust. I do; for where will you find it?

Just. Amongst the Gods.

Injust. Indeed! If so, would not *Jove* have been pun-
ish'd for putting his own Father in Fetters?

Just. Ha! Gods, is it possible Malice can soar so high!
O for some Instrument of Vengeance! that I had but a
Bason to throw at thy Head!

Injust. Thou art an old raving Fool!

Just. Thou an impudent, infamous old Wretch!

Injust. You sprinkle me with Roses,

Just. An impious Carrion!

Injust. You crown me with Garlands.

Just. A Parricide!

Injust. Oh! you pour Gold on me by the handful!

Just. You much better deserve molten Lead.

Injust. All you can say does me no Injury, but on the
contrary is glorious to me.

Just. Thou art most insolent!

Injust. And thou an Idiot!

Just. 'Tis long of thee that the Youth of the Age will
not suffer me to instruct them: The *Athenians* will one
time see the Wrongs you do 'em, tho' now they mind it
not.

Injust. How nasty, and how tatter'd are thy Garments!

Just. You're in your Pomp at present, tho' 'tis not
long since thou didst beg, and might'st compare thy self
to (50) *Telephus*, who bears a Wallet in *Euripides*, and
with his curious Sycophantick Maxims, chews nought
but Stale and Village-gather'd Fragments! —

Injust. O what a Compliment of Wisdom do'st thou
pay me!

(50) Aristophanes here ral-
lies *Euripides*, who, in his *Tele-
phus*, was not content to intro-
duce that King of *Myia* beg-
ging with a Wallet on his Shoul-

der, but has given him the Cha-
racter of a very Rascal, such as
was one *Fandætus*, a Sycophant
by Profession.

Just.

Fust. And what an Impution of Folly it is on *Athena* to foster thee thus, that art the Bane and Ruin of her Youth! —

Injust. Would not you have the Instruction of that young Man, you obsolete old Witch?

Fust. I ought to have, to skreen him from Corruption, not suffer him to be train'd up alone in Talkativeness.

Injust. Come hither, Youth, leave her to her Extravagancies.

Fust. You shall pay for all this. Have you the Assurance to lay Hands on him?

Chor. Nay, cease your Broils and Reproaches. And you that had once the Tuition of a former Age, explain to us what you taught them. Do you likewise tell us the Nature of your new Discipline, that when he has heard both your Pretences, he may make his own Choice of his Mistress.

Fust. 'Tis all I desire on my side.

Injust. And I freely agree to't.

Chor. But which of you shall open the Cause?

Injust. I give her the Precedence freely, and when she has flourish'd her utmost, I will with a Set of new Arguments confound all her stale Maxims: After which, if she will be obstinate and mutter, I will run her thro' with pungent Subtleties, as it were with so many Stings of a Wasp.

Chor. Since you are both so well assur'd of your Merits, let your Discourses plead for you, and by serious Thoughts and convincing Reasons, dispute which of you must carry the Day. For on this Controversy depends all the Fortune or Misery of Wisdom, for which our Friends at this Day have so strong an Aversion: Begin then thou that didst adorn the Predecessors of this People with so many good Qualities, exert thy Power, and in the Confidence of that good Cause so much thou boast'st, confess thy self to Men.

Fust.

Fuf. I'll tell you then what was the Discipline of old, whilst I flourish'd, had Liberty to preach up Temperance to Mankind, and was supported in it by the Laws: Then 'twas not permitted for the Youth to speech it in Publick; but every Morning the young People of each Borough went to their Musick School, march'd with a grave compos'd Countenance thro' the Streets, decent and lightly cloath'd, ev'n when the Snow fell thick. Before their Master they sat with Modesty, in proper Ranks, at distance from each other. There, they were taught to sing in lofty Strains, some Hymn to the great and formidable *Pallas*, or other *Canto* of that kind, in Consort with the strong and masculine Musick of their Country, without pretending to (51) alter the Tones that had been deriv'd down to them by their Forefathers: And if any one were observ'd to wanton it in his Performance, and sing in an effeminate Key, like those that now sing your corrupted Airs (52) of *Phrynis*, he was immediately chastis'd, as one that deprav'd and ruin'd Musick. You would not then have seen a single Instance of one that should dare commit the least Immodesty, or discover ought that Honesty injoin'd him to hide; they were so scrupulously nice in this Respect, that they never forgot to sweep up the Sand on which they had sat. None then assum'd the lawless Minion, or defil'd himself with wanton Glances. None were suffer'd to eat what was an Incentive to Luxury, or injur'd Modesty. Radishes were banish'd from their Meals; the Anise, and Rock Parsely, that are proper for

(51) The Athenians were very careful of keeping their Exercises and Musick in their primitive State, and of preventing all Innovations from getting Ground: The Poet however shews that their Musick at that time was corrupted by the Changes that *Phrynis* had made in it.

(52) He was a very debauch'd Musick Master, and as all Compositions savour of the Composer's Inclinations, so *Phrynis* made only languishing and effeminate Airs, which are now call'd *Tender*; by this means he corrupted the Antique Musick, which was severe, chaste, and masculine,

old Constitutions, were forbid them, and they were Strangers to high and season'd Dishes. They sat with Gravity at Table, never encourag'd an indecent Posture, or the tossing of their Legs lazily up and down.

Injus. Why, all the Matter of this Harangue is of great Antiquity, and might do well in Days of Yore, when every one was precise enough to (53) button up his Hair with a Golden Grashopper! —

Just. Yet this was the Discipline that form'd those great Men under me, who got such Honour at the Battle (54) of *Marathon*; but for thee, thou now instruct'st our Youth to wrap themselves up in thick Cloaths, and live effeminate; so that I have redd'n'd with Indignation to see in your (55) *Panathenean* Festivals, that they scarce have Strength to hold up their Shields, and that they so lazily perform the Dance of *Pallas*. 'Tis reasonable therefore, Youth, that without Demur you should make Choice of me, so you shall learn to hate the litigious Wrangling at Bar; to avoid the dissolute Bagnio's; to be alarm'd at Dishonesty; not take Affronts; to rise before your Elders; never to grieve the Hearts of those to whom you owe your Being; to commit nothing that is dishonourable, but to be the perfect Model of Decency and Modesty. You will learn to decline the Gaiety of Masquerades, least betraying your Eyes with their Inticements and deceitful Pleasure, they draw you insensibly into the Snare, and make you forfeit your fair Character.

(53) This the first *Athenians* did to testify their being Natives of that Country, and no Foreigners; for Grashoppers never change their Country, but live and dye in the Places where they are born.

(54) The *Athenians*, under the Conduct of *Miltiades* at *Marathon*, beat *Datis* and *Artaphernes*,

the Lieutenants of *Darius*, 68 Years before the Playing of this Comedy.

(55) At their Festival call'd *Panathenea*, the young Men danc'd all in Armour, in Imitation of the Dance of *Pallas* after her Victory over the *Titans*.

To conclude, as long as you follow my Precepts, you shall never in any thing contradict your Father, never upbraid him with his Age, a great Part whereof he has spent in your Care and Education.

Injust. Believe me, Youth, if you credit all her Romances, you will become like one of the Sons (56) of Hippocrates, and all the World will account you stupid, and an Ass.

Just. So far from that, you shall every Day have your Body oil'd and perfum'd, and glisten in the Wrestling Schools; not amuse your self with the lazy litigious talkative Impertinence of Pleaders; be molested with no Suits; but when the lusty Spring comes and renews your Vigour, you shall go to the Academy, walk with your Comrades under the Shade of the consecrated Olives, shall smell of *Holme* and *Marjerome*, be entertain'd with the Whispering of the Western Gales thro' the blooming Trees, pass your Time in an honourable Inactivity, and a Repose which nothing can interrupt. If you pursue my Maxims, you shall always be in an healthy State, have a fresh Complexion, large Shoulders, and speak nothing but what is to the purpose. But if you will live like our modern Debauchées, you must have a pale Vifage, narrow Shoulders, and Impertinence of Rhetorick; you will think that Honourable which is Shameful, and be as full of Infamy as *Antimachus*.

Chor. How Admirable and Divine is thy Wisdom, what Strength and Charms have thy Discourses! Happy the Men that liv'd when thou did'st flourish! Now you, her Rival, that have such Pride, and profess a vain fallacious Eloquence, what have you to reply to her firm Reas'nings? You must make use of all your Skill in this Tryal, combat with more solid Arguments than you generally em-

(56) He was a General of the Athenians, and had three Sons *Telosippus*, *Demophon* and *Peri-* *cles*, who were all so stupid and senseless, that they grew into a Proverb,

ploy

ploy, or prepare to be the Scorn and Derision of the World.

Injust. My Bowels have yern'd this half Hour, and I have been in pain to over-turn all that she has pretended to advance. The Philosophers call me *Injustice*, because I am the first that had the happy Resolution to oppose the Laws; and it is an Enterprize deserves all Crowns and Re-compenses, to undertake the most dishonest Causes, and yet carry them. Give me a moment's Patience, and I'll refute the noble Doctrines that she has so spread out, and is so fierce in; she restrains you from going to the Bag-nio's; but pray, what Reason have you to condemn a warm Bath?

Just. Because they are pernicious; enervate Men, and ...

Injust. Hold, I shall presently draw you into such a Premunire, that you will scarce get loose in haste. Who do you find more brave than the Sons of *Jove*, and which of them in your Opinion did the greatest Exploits? Declare.

Just. Hercules.

Injust. And where do you find that this *Hercules* ever entred a cold Bath? Yet was there ever a more valiant Man?

Just. These are the notable Arguments that our Youth eternally dwell on; make the Baths so much frequented, and the Wrestling Schools empty and forsaken.

Injust. You rave at Eloquence, but I applaud it: If it were despicable, the great *Homer* would never have made his *Nestor* so great an Orator, or those other wise Heroes whom he has celebrated. I now proceed to that other Species of Eloquence, they call pleading at Bar. She says that young Men ought not to practise it; I maintain they cannot do a thing more useful: It is the Terror of the Laws, and the Sanctuary of the Unfortunate: She says, we should be temperate and honest; a most pernicious Maxim! for tell me in a word, did any one ever reap any Good thro' his Temperance? Speak, and demonstrate that I talk not Reason.

Just.

Just. Depend on't, thousands. Did not the Gods for this bestow a Divine Sword on (57) *Peleus*?

Injust. A Sword! It must be confess'd the poor Sufferer receiv'd a worthy Present! But *Hyperbolus* has got a large Estate by cheating in his Profession, and flourishes by the Dint of Knavery, and not a Sword!

Just. But the great Reputation of *Peleus's* Wisdom obtain'd him the Honour of *Thetis* for his Bride.

Injust. True, but she soon (58) quitted his Bed, for she found his Wisdom too stay'd a Companion for her in the Night: A sprightly young Woman loves an active Comfort, but thou art a stupid senseless old Sot. Therefore, O Youth, consider what Inconveniences will attend her boasted Temperance, and how many Pleasures you will be depriv'd of in trusting to her. With her you'll neither have fine Women, Company, Sports, Feasting nor Merriment; and is it Life, to live eternally divorce'd from Pleasure? Nature has her absolute Weaknesses; have you given way to Infirmitiy, enter'd into an Amour, and ventur'd Adultery? If you are caught, you must suffer the Law, because you have not Rhetorick to baffle the Accusation. Whereas in following my Counsel, you may enjoy Life; dance, laugh, revel, and think no Pleasure Criminal: If surpriz'd in the Gallantry of your Passion, you will with ease disengage your self; by your Eloquence

(57) *Peleus* retiring to *Solcos* with *Acastus*, to get expiated from a Murther he had committed, *Hippolyta*, the Wife of *Acastus*, fell in Love with him; he not answering her Passion, she accuses him to her Husband of having design'd a Rape on her. *Acastus* unwilling to kill the Man with his own Hands whom he had protected, carried him a Hunting on a Mount, and left him expos'd to the

wild Beasts, after having disarm'd him, while sleeping. *Peleus* awoke just as he was going to be devour'd, and at the instant as he was searching for his Sword, he saw *Mercury* bring him one from Heaven.

(58) *Aristophanes* had this from a Piece of *Sophocles*; where that Poet said, that *Peleus* having grumbled at *Thetis*, she quitted him, and never would go back again.

prove your self blameless, and throw all the Fault on
Love; plead that the God was ever a Slave to Love, that
he could not resist the Charms of a bright Female; and
that it ought not to be expected, that a Man should
have more Strength and Controul over himself than a
Deity.

Just. But if in thy rare Maxims he should come to be
panish'd in the common Method taken with Adulterers,
how will his Eloquence ever perswade him that he is not
cover'd with Infamy?

Injust. Very good; if this slight Accident should be his
Doom, shall he be cover'd with Infamy for this?

Just. How shall he avoid it? Can he come under a
more notorious Disgrace?

Injust. But what will you say, if I make it appear that
this is all Folly?

Just. I'll e'en sit down in silence. But come, what
have you to say?

Injust. Why pray tell me, what Character do our Ora-
tors bear?

Just. As infamous as Adulterers.

Injust. I think so at least: And our Comedians?

Just. As infamous.

Injust. You say true. And our Magistrates?

Just. As infamous.

Injust. You see then the Disgrace you were speaking of
is but a Folly, and that now-a-days 'tis no more than
Common. Now for these Gentlemen the Spectators,
give 'em a serious view, and tell your Opinion of
them.

Just. Hold; I will view them well.

Injust. Now, have you view'd 'em.

Just. By my Faith here is a great part of them even
as infamous as the rest. And without going far for Ex-
amples, look on that Man, and that there, and him with
the fine Head of Hair.

Injust. Then what have you now to say?

Just.

Just. I yield the Day. Therefore, Infamous Sirs, I conjure you in the Name of the Gods, take my Scarff, till I can leap over to you and range my self on your Party, since you are the more strong and numerous.

Socrates, Strepsiades, Phidippides and Chorus.

Socrat. Well, Friend, will you carry back your Son, or leave him here with me to be instructed?

Strepsi. Instruct him, Chastise him, and remember above all to fashion his Tongue to both sorts of Rhetorick; that one may serve for your little trifling Suites, and the other for Causes of the greatest Consequence and Injustice.

Socrat. Put your self in no pain about it; you shall receive him one of the most expert Tongue-pads in the Universe.

Phidip. Yes, faith, if to look lean and in a starving Condition be to be Expert!

Chor. Go in then. But I conceive the time will come that you may repent of what you're doing. [Exeunt.



A C T

A C T IV. SCENE I.

Enter Strepsiades alone.

WE are now advanc'd to the Six and twentieth Day of the Month; 26, 27, 28, 29 — Ah! What Apprehensions have I of that Day which is now approaching, and that is the damn'd 30th? How I abhor and detest it, and hold it more execrable than all other Days! All my Creditors threaten me with Executions, and swear that they will ruin me with Costs, tho' I make them the most reasonable Proposals in Nature. Sirs, say I, concerning the three Dividends of my Debt, don't require the first Payment down, give me a little time for the second, and be so kind as to forgive me the third. But they are absolutely deaf to my Terms, and will not be paid in this Coin. They call me Names, say I'm Unjust, a Shuffler, and a Trickster; they are preparing to Summon me before the Court, and force me to secure their Demands.— Let 'em do it; I defie their worst; and will laugh in their Faces, if *Phidippides* have but learnt to handle his Tongue right. I'll soon know his Progress, and knock at the School Door to be satisfied.

[Knocks.]

Enter Socrates to him.

Socrat. Good morrow, Strepsiades.

Strepſiſ. Good morrow, Socrates, — I pray you to accept this Sack of Wheat; tis reasonable a Disciple should testify by some little Acknowledgment the Esteem he has for his Master. But resolve me a little, has my Son taken that same Rhetorick which you have brought in fashion?

Socrat. Perfectly well!

Strepſiſ. O mighty Regent, Injustice, how gloriously will things go!

D

Socrat.

Socrat. So that you may immediately disengage your self from any Suit you are involv'd in whatever.

Strepſi. What! tho' there were Witnesses by, when I bor-row'd the Mony?

Socrat. The better, if there were a thousand Wit-nesses.

Strepſi. Then will I go sing a Note above Els: Upon my faith, my noble Usurers, you may go and hang your selves at your best leisure; you're all routed, with your Books of Account, your Principal, Interest, and Interest upon Interest: From this moment I'll make you my Sport, and it shall not be in your pow'r's to prejudice me; for I have a Son train'd up in this College, whose Tongue cuts like a two-edg'd Sword, and who will puzzle the whole World with his Oratory. A Son that will be my Support, the Restorer of my House, the Terror of my Enemities, and who will strait deliver me from all my vexations. Call him out, and let me see him this instant: Son! Child! Hear the Voice of thy Father, and come forth.

Socrat. Here he comes.

Strepſi. O my dear Boy! my dear Boy!

Socrat. You may now receive him to you and take him home. [Exit Socrates.

Enter Phidippides.

Strepſi. My dear Son, how I rejoice to see thy Improvement in the Wannels of thy Countenance; your whole Mien speaks a denial of your Debts, and a full Capacity of Disputation: 'Tis now that the notable Manners of your Country flourish in you! Ha, what do you say? I am no longer in doubt: You are directly able to make the Nonsuited Blockheads pay Costs, you wear the Countenance of a free Athenian; it behoves you therefore to draw me out of Tribulation, since it was you plung'd me into i.

Phidip. What is my Father in fear of?

Strepſi. This Old and New Moon,

Phidip.

The CLOUDS. 51

Phidip. Can it be Old and New all at the same time?

Strepsi. My Creditors threaten to take Execution, as soon as ever it comes.

Phidip. They will lose their Money; for 'tis morally impossible the Moon should be Old and New at the same time.

Strepsi. Impossible, say you?

Phidip. Most undoubtedly. For, to give you an Example, how can a Woman be young and old at once?

Strepsi. O, but this is a thing establish'd so by the Laws.

Phidip. But they don't understand the Letter of the Law.

Strepsi. Why, how is the Letter?

Phidip. Solon, our ancient Law-giver, was an extreme Lover of the People.

Strepsi. And does this concern the Old and New Moon?

Phidip. He intended that the Consignment should be taken for two days, for that of the Old and that of the New Moon; and that those who would prosecute a Debtor, should consign him the Day of the New.

Strepsi. But why does he then speak of the Old?

Phidip. O my God, how very dull you are! 'Tis to the end that those who should be cited before the Judges, should have the whole last Day of the Month for their Appearance, and to disengage themselves without Process; and that they might have no body to blame but themselves, if they were tormented on the Morn of the first Day of the subsequent Month.

Strepsi. Why then do not our Magistrates take the Consignments on the first Day of the Month, rather than on the Day of the Old and New Moon.

Phidip. Because those Gentlemen are like your liquorish Glutons, that will be lapping into Sauces before they are made;

Strepſi. O you miserable Usurers, how can you fit here so ſimply, with your Arms croſſed like Niggards? we Men of Wit and Spirit manage our Affairs at your Cost, and, upon my Faith, you are our Bubbles, our eaſie Fools, Stones, Sheep, meer Wine Casks. I muſt compose a Song of Triumph to be chanted to our Honour. O moſt Fortunate *Strepſiades*, how learned art thou, and what a learned Son thou haſt! Thus will my Friends ſalute me, charm'd with thy Eloquence, when thou ſhalt get the better in the moſt fraudulent Caufes. But come let us go in, that I may firſt regale you at my Table. [Exiunt.]

Enter *Pafias* and an Evidence.

Pafi. Shall a Man ſit down thus with the loſs of his Substance? I cannot agree to it. It is much better to rid ones Hands of this foolish Modesty, than ſubmit to ſo much Plague. My Friend, I have brought you along for my Witness in a Mony Affair, wherein I am going to make an Enemy of a Neighbour. But there's no Remedy; I will be a ſtiff *Athenian*, and not disgrace my Country with a foolish shyness: I'll call out *Strepſiades*. Ho! Within there —

Enter *Strepſiades*.

Strepſi. What's the matter?

Pafi. I injoin you to appear before the Judges on the time of the Old and New Moon.

Strepſi. Sir, I defire you to take notice, that this Man enjoins me to appear on two diſſerent Days. — But pray, on what account do you enjoin my Appearance?

Pafi. For the Twelve Pounds I gave you Credit for, when you bought the laſt Horse.

Strepſi. Horſe? I bought an Horſe? Gentlemen, can't you all anſwer for me, that I hate Horſes and all Horſemanship like the Devil?

Pafi.

Pas. And, by *Jove!* you swore to me by all the Gods, that you would make a punctual Payment.

Strepſi. O by Jingo, then 'twas before my Son had learnt those invincible Arguments he is now Master of.

Pas. And because he is Master of them now, would you deny this Debt?

Strepſi. Ay, certainly; for what other Advantage could I reap from his Knowledge?

Pas. But suppose I bring you on your Oath, you will not be so hardy as to call the Gods to Witness that you owe me nothing?

Strepſi. To call the Gods to Witness? What Gods are you talking of?

Pas. Jupiter, Mercury, Neptune —

Strepſi. O yes, by *Jupiter*; and I submit to pay double the Deb^r, if I do not swear it.

Pas. The Gods confound you for this Impudence!

Strepſi. Twould be a mighty Service to that Man now to give him a good Quantity of Hellebore, for he has sufficient occasion for it.

Pas. What is the meaning of this Raillery?

Strepſi. Some six Pounds of it might do his Busines.

Pas. I swear by the great *Jove*, and all the other Gods, that you shall not always mock me thus, and 'scape my Resemments.

Strepſi. By my Faith, you divert me extremely with your Gods. That same *Jove* you swear by, is the greatest Jeafth imaginable with your Men of Wit and Spirit.

Pas. O the Miscreant! The time will come that you shall rue for these Blasphemies: But will you pay me or not? Give me an Answer, and don't make me lose any more time.

Strepſi. Have a little Patience, Friend; I'll be here immediately, and give you a clear Answer. [Going in.

Pas. What can he design by all this? Nay, prithee *Strepſiades*, shall I be fairly paid?

Strepſi. Not that I know: Will you have done being impertinent, quit my Doors and follow your Busines?

Pafias. Yes, I will; but if I don't enter my Action this Minute, may I not live to see another Day.

Strepſi. Twill be but swelling the Sum, and adding a fresh Los to the Twelve Pounds you talk of: I am really troubled, that you shou'd run your self into these Inconveniences! ha, ha, ha! [Exeunt Pafias and his Evidence.]

Enter at another Door Amyrias and an Evidence.

Aymn. Alas! alas! how miserable am I!

Strepſi. Heigh! heigh!— Whence come these dismal Lamentations? Sure 'tis one (59) of *Carcinus's* Gods broke loose upon us.

Amyr. What, would you know who I am? a Wretch—

Strepſi. O keep all your good Fortune to your self.

Amyr. O cruel Chance! O Fortune, how hast thou Destroy'd my Carr! O *Pallas*, how I'm ruin'd!

Strepſi. Why, prithee, what hurt can (60) *Tlepolemus* have done thee?

Amyr. For Goodness sake don't jeer me, but rather order your Son to restore me the Mony he owes me; especially at this juncture, when I am so unfortunate.

Strepſi. What Mony is this you are talking of?

Amyr. The Mony that I lent him?

(59) Aristophanes banters *Carcinus*, who had made a Tragedy wherein he introduc'd Deities, who made great Lamentations, and complain'd of their Miseries.

(60) These words of *Amyrias*, *O Cruel Chance*, *O Fortune!* &c. are taken out of a

Tragedy of *Xenocles*, where *Altmena* complains of her Misfortune, because *Tlepolemus* had kill'd *Lycimnius*. *Strepſades* hearing *Amyrias* repeat these Verses, which he knew, very naturally asks *Amyrias*, What Mischief *Tlepolemus* had done him?

Strepſi.

Strepsi. As far as I can understand, your Affairs are but in an ill Posture.

Amyn. Right, by Heav'n; for Exercising my Horses just now in a Chariot-race, I got a dismal Fall.

Strepsi. From the Box of the Chariot! You mistake it Man; Nature design'd thee only to ride on an Ass: You are downright delirious.

Amyn. What! because I demand my own?

Strepsi. You certainly cannot be in your Wits.

Amyn. For what Reason?

Strepsi. Your Brains seem to me to be disturb'd.

Amyn. But, by Mercury! I swear, if you do not answer my Demands, I will immediately prosecute you.

Strepsi. Hold; do you answer my Demand: Are you of Opinion, that every time *Fove* makes it Rain, there is a new Creation of those Waters that fall, or is it always the same which the Sun from time to time draws up into the Sky?

Amyn. I don't know, I never trouble my self with such Whimsies.

Strepsi. Ha! why thou art not worthy of a Copper Farthing, if thou hast no Knowledge of the Celestial Sciences?

Amyn. If you are not directly provided for the Princip'l, at least let me have the Interest.

Strepsi. Interest! What Beast is that?

Amyn. What should it be but that whereby our Mony gradually increases, as Time insensibly slides on by Days and Months.

Strepsi. Very well: But tell me further; Do you conceive that the Sea is fuller now than it was at first?

Amyn. No, by *Fove*; I believe 'tis much at one; and it would not be well it should be fuller.

Strepsi. How, Scoundrel! you say that the Sea, into which all the Rivers in the World flow, is not fuller by this addition than it was at first; and do you expect your Mony to encrease and swell every Day? Can you have

the Assurance to stay after this? Give me a Horsewhip there —

Evid. I am a Witness of this scurvy Usage.

Strepſi. Why d'ye stand prating then? Why don't you brush off?

Amyn. Is not this an unpardonable Violence?

Strepſi. Why don't you depart? By my faith I shall strap your Hide, as I would a resty Steed's, if you don't take care to save me the Labour. O! are you gone?

[*Exeunt Amynias and Evidence.*

'Tis well done, or I should have exercis'd you with your damn'd Chariots and Horses, and Racing and Jockeyship.

[*Ex. Strepſiades.*



A C T

ACT V. SCENE I.

Strepsiades runs out, followed by Phidippides with a Cudgel.

Strepſi. A H! Murther! Murther! Neighbours, Kinsmen, Townſfolkſ, lend me your Aſſiſtance; I ſhall be kill'd: O my Head! O my Jaws! O the Villain! What, beat your Father!

Phidiſ. Indeed do I.

Strepſi. See, with what Forehead he maintains his Inſolence!

Phidiſ. Why ſhould I not maintain it?

Strepſi. O the Wretch, Thief, Parricide!

Phidiſ. Nay, go on, run thro' your List of Defama-tion, and invent new Terms of Abuse; you cannot please me better.

Strepſi. The Infamous Wretch!

Phidiſ. You ſhed Roſes on me.

Strepſi. Dare to aſſault your Father!

Phidiſ. Moft certainly; and I'll make it as clear as the Sun at Noon-Day, that I had reaſon ſo to do.

Strepſi. O Impious Miſcreant! How can there be a reaſon to beat a Father?

Phidiſ. I'll prove it, and convince you.

Strepſi. You prove it!

Phidiſ. Yes, on my Word; only chufe which of the two Methods you would have me uſe.

Strepſi. What two Methods?

Phidiſ. Of thoſe two Methods Socrates has taught me.

Strepſi. In Sincerity, by putting you to the Academy to learn to plead againſt the Laws, I have not ſucceeded ill in my Deſign, Wretched as I am! if you can prove that Children have a Right of beating their Parents.

Phidip. I will undoubtedly prove it, and so clearly, that when you have heard me out, you shall not have the least Syllable to reply.

Strepſi. Very good; let me hear what you have to say.

Chor. 'Tis now your businesſ, old Gentleman, to take care to coap with your Son; he's become very Insolent, and relies on his Wit to bear him out; and he has doubtless ſome Argument on which he grounds his Confidence; but tell us, in Ihort, what was the Caufe of your Quarrel.

Strepſi. I'll give you an Account. Just now, you ſaw that we went in a-Doors; as we were ſetting at Table and making Merry, I entreated this good Son of mine, to take his Instrument and ſing to it the Ode which *Simonides* made on the Golden Fleece. He preſently replied it was (61) no longer the Fashion to ſing at Table, and that ſuch Songs are only proper for Women over their Kneading Troughs.

Phidip. Well, and did not you deserve a thouſand Strokes for making ſuch a Request? To have me ſing at Table, forſooth!

Strepſi. He ſaid thoſe very Words within, and added that *Simonides* is a vile Poet: I confeſs at thoſe Words I could scarce contain my ſelf; however, I did. Then I bad him take a branch of Myrtle, and ſing ſomething of *Aeschylus*'s: And what do you think was his Answer? For my part, ſays he, I find that *Aeschylus* is the firſt of the Poets; but he is puffy, without Order, harsh, and always on the high Ropes: (62) Don't you think my Choler was mov'd

(61) This was false; it was the Mode, and not disapprov'd by *Socrates*; but *Strepſades* had got *Euripides* in his Head, and Espous'd his Sentiments; who in one of his Tragedies ſays, that Muſick ought to be banish'd from Feasts, and only be employd' at Interments, and other Occasions of Mourning.

(62) For *Aeschylus* was in great Estimation with the Athenians, who order'd by a Decree that his Pièces ſhould be play'd.

at these Words? Nevertheless I represt it, and said to him, Sing me then some fine Passage out of the more Modern Poets. He presently chose one out of a piece of *Euripides*; where, O great Gods, may I speak of it, (63) a Brother marries his own Sister. 'Tis true; I could no longer submit to this Scandal, but presently I betook my self to Revilings, and gave him one ill Word upon another; he returned me the same Language, I gave it him back again; and thereupon the Villain leaped upon me, gave me a thousand Blows, took me by the Throat, and threw me at his Feet.

Phidip. Was it not with Justice that I did it, when you pretended to accuse the wisest of the Poets?

Strepis. He the wisest! But what am I doing? I shall incur a fresh Beating.

Phidip. Yes, by my Faith, and with a great deal of Reason.

Strepis. How, with Reason, Impudent as you are! I that have brought you up from a Child, heard all your Infant Babblings, knew when you desired to drink, and when to eat, and could hold you out when I saw you redder and grunt; and now to recompence me for all my Care you beat me, and instead of making me a Return of Gratitude you squeeze'd me by the Throat till I was perfectly strangled.

Chor. I conceive all our young Gentry attend with the greatest Uneasiness and Impatience the Issue of this young Blade's Proceedings; for if he by his Eloquence can bring his late Action into Request and Approbation, I would not

(63) This piece of *Euripides* was his *Aethus*, wherein *Mea-rens* married *Canace*. *Aristophanes* slips no opportunity of reproving that Poet, and he reproaches him here for having introduce'd on the Stage an incestuous Marriage betwixt a Bro-

ther and Sister. 'Tis remarkable that this very Reprof falls likewise hard upon *Socrates*; who approv'd this Incest of Brothers with their own Sisters, as appears by the 5th Book of *Plato's Republick*.

give

give an Half-penny for the Skins of all the old Fathers in Town. 'Tis thy part therefore, oh thou Introducer of Novelties, to be arm'd with Perswasion and the Power of Convincing that thy Action is just.

Phidip. O! What a pleasure 'tis to learn what others know nothing of, and to be able to bring the most Establish'd Laws into Contempt!— Whilst I alone minded the Diversions of Riding, I could not bring out three Words together without some egregious Error; but since this good Man has debarr'd me of that Exercise, and let me into the Subtleties of Rhetorick and Eloquence, I believe I can make it very apparent, that 'tis equitable to give a Father due Correction.

Strepsi. O, by Jove, rather go on with your Horsemanship. 'Tis much better for me to find Harness and Furniture, than to bear a damn'd drubbing every Day of my Life.

Phidip. I ask you, Sir; did not you beat me, whilst I was a Child?

Strepsi. Yes, most certainly; because I loved you, and had a great Concern for your well-doing.

Phidip. Resolve me then, if you please, Is it not just that I should make you the same return, and thro' the Friendship I have for you, I should likewise discipline you, since it is only a Testimony of Respect? For by what Right shall you be more exempt from Blows than me? I look upon my self as much a Freeman born as you are. Is it your Opinion that the Children shall all be subject to Correction, and the Fathers not brought to their Tears in their Turn?

Strepsi. But for what?

Phidip. Will you pretend that there is a Provision in the Law that Children only shall be beaten? If so, I reply to this, that old Men are in their second Childhood; and it is so much the more reasonable they should be chastis'd, as it is less supportable to see them in Errors.

Strepsi. But there is no Law that orders Fathers to be so treated by their own Children.

Phidip.

Phidip. Was not he that first made the Laws, and by his fine Discourses perswaded the Ancients to receive them, a Man, like us? Why then shall not I be allow'd as well as he to make a Law, which shall order Children to beat their Fathers? What's past, is past; we forgive you all the Blows you have given us, Precedent to the Establishment of this Law; and submit to those Beatings without any Questions on the Matter. Do but reflect on our Cocks, or any other Animals, how they defend themselves against the Insults of their Sires: Now I think there lies no other Difference betwixt them and us, but that they have no Laws at all.

Strepſi. Very well Sir; if you are so much dispos'd to take a Cock for your Pattern, why don't you seek your Dinner in a Dunghill, and make your Lodging in a Hen-roost?

Phidip. Pho! that's not the same thing, nor would *Socrates* himself allow it as such.

Strepſi. Then pray, beat me no more; if you do, you may repent it another Day.

Phidip. How, shall I repent it?

Strepſi. Yes, for if you allow me the Liberty of correcting you, the same will belong to you of correcting your Son when you have one; instead of which, if you beat me, you ought to expect the same future Treatment from yours.

Phidip. Ay, but suppose I have none? I must suffer my self to be beat all my Life upon a Supposal, and you laugh in your Grave for having made a Fool of me!

Strepſi. Well, Friends; my Son has Reason on his Side; we must submit to his Arguments; is it not just that we should be beaten, if we do slip into Folly?

Phidip. But, hearken to one Reason more.

Strepſi. I am in a wretched Way already.

Phidip. Perhaps when you have heard it, you won't be concern'd for having been beaten.

Strepſi. How so? Speak; what Advantage can I receive from it?

Phidip.

Phidip. It is, that I may likewise beat my Mother!

Strepsi. What say'st thou, Villain? This is a Crime more heinous than the former.

Phidip. But what would you have to say to me, if by my Rhetorick I can prove to you that one is oblig'd in Conscience to beat one's Mother?

Strepsi. What should I have to say to you? But that you may go and throw your self into the River, together with your *Socrates*, and confounded Rhetorick? O ye great Clouds, you are the Causes of these my Sufferings, for I repos'd the Care of my Conduct entirely on you.

Chor. 'Tis your self that have drawn down all these Disgraces, by giving your self over to Injustice.

Strepsi. Why did you not caution me of that? You intended to deceive a poor simple Villager.

Chor. We always treat those in this kind, that are so inclin'd to Vice, and never fail throwing them into amazing Misfortunes, till by a Contrition for their Errors, they learn to reverence the Gods of their Country.

Strepsi. Alas! great Goddesses, the Resentment is harsh, but yet just; for I ought not to defraud my Creditors of what is their Due. Therefore, my dear Son, go along with me, and let us soundly thrash that audacious *Charphon*, and that Rascal *Socrates*, who have impos'd on us both.

Phidip. O, I am very cautious of misusing my Masters!

Strepsi. Believe me, my Son; and let us reverence for the future our (64) Paternal Gods, and the great *Jove*.

Phidip. Our Paternal Gods, and the great *Jove*! You certainly belong to another World; for tell me pray, who is that *Jove* you talk of? Is he any longer to be mention'd?

(64) The Athenians worshiped *Jupiter* and *Apollo*, under the Title of *Dii Patrii*; because those Gods had first appear'd to their Ancestors in Attica.

Strepsi.

Strepsi. Yes, most assuredly.

Phidip. But I say he is not; *Yove* has lost his Dominion, and Ætherial Impulse rules in his stead! —

Strepsi. He has not lost his Dominion; I was only imposs'd on in that Ætherial Impulse, whose Figure I saw in Socrates's School. Wretch that I was! to take that damn'd Ætherial Impulse for a God. —

Phidip. You may stay by your self, and mutter these Follies and Extravagancies as long as you please.

[*Ex. Phidippides.*]

Strepsi. Miserable Fool that I am! had not I bid adieu to all Sense, when, by the Perswasion of *Socrates*, I absolutely rejected all the Gods? But my dear *Mercury*, [addressing himself to the Statue of Mercury before his own Door.] be not wholly incens'd against me, nor quite confound me, I beseech you: Pardon me the Faults that I have run into thro' Levity and Sottishness; and vouchsafe still to counsel me, whether I shall not prosecute these Impostors. I conjure you, dear *Mercury*, to advise me for the best. — [Leans his Ear close to the Statue, as if whispering.] Oh, you have Reason: — 'Tis prudently advis'd for me not to prosecute them publickly, but to direct me forthwith to set Fire to the House of these Sellers of Smoke. Hola! hola! *Xanthias*, come hither, bring a Ladder, and Axe; and if you love your Master, get up to the Top of this cursed Academy, and hew the Roof as stoutly as you can, till you make it tumble on the Rascal's Heads. Let some Body bring me a lighted Torch, that I may this moment revenge my self of these Sophisters, who are full of Vanity and Cheats.

[*Strepfiades's Servants bring forth Torches, and set Fire to the Academy; Cenagoras, Socrates and Chærephon, run out in a Confusion.*]

Cenag. Hai! hai! hai! there.

Strepsi. Go on; and my lovely Torch set their Den in Blaze, burn the whole House to Ashes.

Cenag. What art thou doing, Man?

Strepsi.

Strepsi. Doing? Oh, nothing, nothing; I have only a little Philosophical Dispute with the Beams and Joists of this House.

Cenag. Alas! who is it that sets Fire to our Apartment?

Strepsi. Only the Man you robb'd of his Cloaths.

Cenag. Hell confound you! you will destroy us.

Strepsi. I intend it, Man; provided the Axe don't deceive my Hopes, or I don't break my Neck.

Socrat. Soho! there. What do you do upon the House!

Strepsi. I expatiate in the Fields of Air, and contemplate the Sun!

Socrat. O miserable! I shall be suffocated.

Strepsi. Why do you then blaspheme the Gods?

Chare. I shall be burnt to Death; Wretch that I am! ---

Strepsi. O, make curious Disquisitions into the Motions of the Moon! Soho, Xanthias, pursue them, bang 'em, knock 'em down, there are a thousand Reasons for it, but principally because they have injur'd the Divine Powers.

[*The Academy is fir'd, and Strepsiades and his Servants beat in Socrates, &c.*

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